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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

JULY 1912

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

The Spiritual Organ of Humanity

THE Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society, a report of whose proceedings is contained in this number of The Theosophical Quarterly, was reminded by the Chairman of the Executive Committee that The Theosophical Society is *the spiritual organ of humanity*. The members were asked to keep in mind that we had Mme. Blavatsky's clear assurance, held with full conviction by many, that The Theosophical Society is an expression and an instrument of the Theosophical Movement; and that this Movement is a continuous spiritual force, a continuing spiritual effort, which has had its differing outward expression in a long series of past centuries, and is destined to express itself, in some fitting instrument, in all future ages.

If we recognize the truth and justice of this, if we take Mme. Blavatsky's statement not so much as a dogmatic assertion but rather as a most illuminating guide and clew, and look into the matter for ourselves, we shall be prepared to realize that, in each century the Theosophical Movement has had its proper activity and expression, has formed its own instrument, exactly adapted to the need and character of that age.

The records are defective; in many cases, those who have had the handling of them and who have not yet realized the benign purpose and destiny of the Theosophical Movement, have not so dealt with the records as to make them easy to decipher. Perhaps there has even been voluntary mutilation and confusion. And there has been another power at work, whose importance we are singularly well placed to real-

ize, since in our own time its influence has been overcome, for the first time in many centuries.

We have been told by Mme. Blavatsky, and many of us, taking her word as guide, have verified the law for ourselves, that, in the last quarter of every century the eternal Theosophical Movement finds its outer expression, its instrument, through which the spiritual powers work, to meet the spiritual need and hunger of the time. And we have likewise been told that, century after century, under the pressure of the closing cycle of the years, that expression, that instrument, has been broken, going to pieces altogether, or remaining like a wreck on the shoals and sandbanks of time. In our day, for the first time in many centuries, in spite of storms and tempests and hurricanes, in spite of wars and convulsions and attacks, the outer organ and expression has held together, thanks to the blessing of the spiritual powers, to the increasing spirituality of mankind, and to the advance of cyclic time, which has brought this victory as divine first fruits of still greater victories to come.

In a certain sense, all the great spiritual religions of humanity are expressions of the Theosophical Movement. Mme. Blavatsky made this convincingly clear, in an article reprinted in the last number of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY. They are that, and something more, as they are the expression of deep spiritual forces and powers lying at the very heart of things, and concentrated and brought through to our world by the DIVINE MEN, the Avatars, who, having long ago safely forded the river of death, have in their deep compassion, left the security of the further shore, to return again through the river to this our world, seeking to lead humanity through the dark, mysterious waters.

Each of the great spiritual religions, therefore, as Mme. Blavatsky taught us, has the Divine Man, the Avatar, at its heart; and in this way differs from all other and lesser manifestations and expressions of the Theosophical Movement. But among these lesser expressions are to be reckoned many efforts and impulses, made century after century, to cleanse the great religions, and restore them to their pristine purity and power. And, in the last analysis, these cleansing and restorative efforts go back, in each religion, to the Divine Man, the Avatar, who stands at the head and source of that religion, and of whose spiritual consciousness it is intended and destined to become the expression and outward embodiment.

Mme. Blavatsky and her august Eastern co-workers made this abundantly recognized in the case of the religions in India. She showed that Siddhartha the Compassionate bore his title of Tathagata, "he who

has come like those before him," because he was indeed "the successor of the Arahat Buddhas of old." The religious movement of which he was the center was not a "new" religion; it was the return to the old religion which inspired the Upanishads, the religion whose mystical Masters were drawn from the race of the Red Rajputs, the Warrior-Kings of the great plain of Western India. There was a single spiritual current, largely fed by the aspiration and effort of that race, but having its divine counterpart in the spiritual world, like the fable of "the heavenly Ganges;" and from this single stream were drawn the purifying waters of life, for which the Buddha labored, with such splendid success, to create a great and enduring reservoir.

We also learned, from Mme. Blavatsky and her august fellow-workers, that the effort, of which the historical founding of Buddhism was an expression, by no means ceased when Siddhartha was translated, but was and is a continuing effort, the spiritual powers of which are symbolized by what are known as the divine re-incarnations in Tibet, the series of which Tsong-ka-pa has been cited as the greatest and most completely successful. There have been, and will continue to be, other movements to conserve and purify the spiritual life of Buddhism, in each of the great Buddhist lands: in Burma, Siam, Ceylon, China Korea, Mongolia, Japan. And each of these has had, and must ever have, one defined purpose and goal: to bring the spiritual thought of that time and land closer to the first ideal, to the continued spiritual vision of the Divine Man, the Avatar, who first gave it birth.

We cannot consider Mahommed to have been an Avatar of the stature of the Buddha, nor was his teaching a mystical and spiritual revelation in the fullest sense. Yet he and his teaching had their divine elements, their vision of the invisible: most of all, their valiant acceptance of the Will of God. Islam means the peace of acceptance, the divine peace that passes all understanding. But we can see the working of the hidden power, the bursting forth of the hidden streams of life, in many mystical movements which arose within the boundaries of Islam, even though they were not logical outgrowths of Mahommed's thought and life. There have been such outgrowths in many of the lands of Islam, in Arabia, in Persia, among the Moslems in India and even China, and in our own day there are signs of such a movement among the Turks.

Take, for example, the mystical movement of the Sufis, the most spiritual, perhaps, that Islam has yet produced. The conquering Moslems overthrew the old Persian kingdom and banished the Zoroastrian faith, with its ancient mystical life which goes back to the same source as the Vedic hymns of Ancient India. The Moslems almost perfectly

succeeded in destroying and burying the old Persian wisdom-religion, and filling its place with the new teachings of the Koran. But Zoroastrianism had its revenge. Like captive Greece, it led captive its rude conqueror. The spirit of the vanished religion breathed itself into the conquering faith, giving to Mahommedanism a mystical lining which has vivified it ever since.

One might find a parallel in the way in which, in the so-called Neo-Platonism, the ancient wisdom-religion of Egypt sought to breathe its life into third-century Christianity, which threatened to become too narrow, too dogmatic, too much a return to older Judaism, and to fall too far short of the living ideal of its Avatar-Founder. And one might point to many elements and inspirations in these first teachings which are the very life and spirit of most ancient Egypt, and had their antetype in that far earlier Avatar and Divine Man whom we know as Osiris. In one sense, the teaching of Jesus was a new outbreathing of the pristine wisdom of Egypt, just as the teaching of Siddhartha the Buddha was a new expression of the earliest divine teaching of the King-Initiates of India. And in one sense we may say that one mystical movement after another, of those that sought to purify Christianity from the corruptions of the times, was a new outbreathing of the first ideal spirit, a movement of return toward the Avatar, the Divine Man, its source.

So, in many ways, from many lands, in many ages, we seek to illustrate the working of the vast, world-old, world-wide Theosophical Movement: the spiritual current in human life. And we do this, in order to understand and define more clearly the true and magnificent function of The Theosophical Society, which is intended and destined to be the effective instrument of that spiritual current; to be, therefore, *the spiritual organ of humanity*. If time and space permitted, and our knowledge of cyclic law and the great rhythmic harmonies of the races sufficed, we could show in detail, with reference to century after century, to one epoch and phase of civilization after another, that the same want never exactly repeats itself, the same spiritual need never arises twice, in just the same way. It follows from this, first, that the Theosophical Movement is never called on to repeat itself, to do a second time exactly the same thing in just the same way; it follows, in the second place, as cyclic change brings ever new needs, as the great treasure of human consciousness brings forth things old and new, that a repetition of an old curative and restorative process, to meet a wholly new need and condition, would be not only ineffective but impossible. The need calls forth the required expression of the Theosophical Movement. The spiritual demand directs the spiritual supply.

We have suggested that the present is different from all past centuries in this: that the organ created by the Theosophical Movement in that period of external expression which began in 1875, has survived into the new century, and continues to gather new life, to make healthy and inspiring progress. This was not the case a century ago, with the movement inaugurated by Martinez Pasquales, St. Germain, Cagliostro and Louis Claude St. Martin. The instruments they sought to create, whether Masonic or mystical, broke to pieces in their hands; broke so completely, that only distorted fragments of their history remain, from which harsh, unjust, wholly misleading conclusions are too often drawn.

But, where the movement of the eighteenth century, like so many of its predecessors, failed, the movement of the nineteenth century has succeeded. The Theosophical Society, the organ formed by that movement, survives, grows, gathers strength, manifests its genuine life and power. As *the spiritual organ of humanity,* it has a high destiny: first to discern, and then to supply, from year to year, nay, from hour to hour, the instant needs of mankind, and first of all, as the key to all, the spiritual needs, the needs of the spiritual man. Each century, each quarter-century, each decade, each year, each day, has its own special import, its own special want. It is the high destiny of The Theosophical Society, as *the spiritual organ of humanity,* first wisely to discern these changing needs, and then valorously to supply them.

During the last three months The Theosophical Society has lost by death two valued and esteemed members, Dr. W. A. R. Tenney and Mr. J. D. Bond. Dr. Tenney was for years one of the most active, self-forgetting and effective members of the Cincinnati Branch, one of those who, at a critical time, infused new energy into the Branch, and gave it a new lease of life. Dr. Tenney was justly esteemed, and held a high place in the life of his community; he had the gifts and tastes of a student; he was wholly forgetful of himself, when he saw an opportunity to help another. Mr. J. D. Bond, a veteran of the Civil War, died full of years and after a long term of service in the ranks of The Theosophical Society. He was one of the builders and inspirers of the Branch at Fort Wayne, and the gentleness of his character, his impersonal serenity, his clear devotion to the highest principles, left a permanent impress on the work, and on the hearts of his fellow-workers. In later years, Mr. Bond travelled much, living in California, in the Hawaiian Islands, even making a tour round the world, by way of New Zealand and Ceylon, so that many had an opportunity to learn and value the sweetness and fine serenity which were the dominant qualities of this old and esteemed worker.

C. J.

FRAGMENTS

MEN have been taught to regard religion as set over against the world, and that the world and the things of the world must be surrendered; making of life a *dual* thing. Theosophy insists upon essential *unity;* declares that all duality is an appearance only—one of the snares of Mara—and though never attempting to deny the appearance—on the contrary, accepting it on its own plane, and allowing and providing for it there—asserts that life is misunderstood until this fundamental truth is fully accepted. Its realization belongs to the second birth, "the birth from above," when the mortal has put on some measure of immortality, and so may have consciousness of the laws and conditions of an immortal world.

Personal life, when mistaken or sinful, has to be given up in many of its expressions, until those expressions, purified and understood, can be experienced as expressions of the soul. This giving up, however, is in reality only temporary, and in order that we may possess more fully and truly later on.

The Master did not come to take things away from us, but to give them to us; "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." He set the sword of His division between the world and the spirit, until such time as man shall see that the world is but an expression of the spirit; that happiness—personal happiness—lies in obedience to the laws of the spirit; until, in other words, the Kingdom of God shall come in our hearts. Then there is peace; and man enters again the Garden of Eden from which disobedience drove him forth. Then the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and the desert shall blossom as the rose; and he who has become as a little child shall live in the midst. Dear vision of Paradise! Man has never lost it and never shall, until some day its reality is ours, when by the path of obedience we return whence we came.

All that God created was "good," and He created all things,—in Heaven above and in earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth. Therefore Nature in all her phases is divine, an expression of God, an incarnation of God, because essentially one with the spirit of God, and perfectly obedient to His law. But only to the pure in heart is the vision of God assured.

The attainment of self-consciousness, God's greatest and last gift to man, necessitates the action of free will; and so man experiments with Nature, misunderstanding and degrading and befouling her, and then turns in wrath upon the deformities he has created. It is, however, only in the sphere where his limited degree of consciousness operates, that this has occurred; great Nature herself remains uncontaminated, and in time filters even his evil to the sweetness of her own eternal purity.

For evil has no existence of itself, even as mind has no existence of itself. Mind is the creator of evil, and both are essentially non-existent—the great delusion. Mind is but a point in consciousness,—consciousness limited rather than universal. The man's *mind* marks the content or limitation of his consciousness; so that while the action of the mind *on this plane* is positive, it is, in and of itself, negative, and can be made truly positive only as it becomes an expression of spiritual will. For Occultism defines mind as the resultant of the action and re-action of the spiritual will (Buddhi) upon the various planes of the psychic world, and maintains that man has to travel by the law of cyclic progression, along the pathway thus cleared, back to consciousness itself; self-consciousness having been gained in the process, since consciousness has seen itself reflected in the mirror of the lower worlds.

One may travel the way to the Path by means of knowledge, for knowledge will lead to love. But he who can love is on the Path already, since God is Love, and in loving we hold God by the hand.

CAVÉ.

THEOSOPHY AND SECULAR LITERATURE

VIII

Thomas Carlyle

"The hero is he who lives in the inward sphere of things, in the True, Divine, and Eternal, which exists always, unseen to most, under the Temporary, Trivial."

IN Christ's parable of Dives and Lazarus, the rich man, in torment, beseeches the All-ruling Father to send Lazarus on an errand of mercy back into the world in order that the brothers of Dives may be converted from their sins. The All-Father makes an unqualified refusal to the prayer: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." The wisdom of Father Abraham's refusal has significant justification in our own day. Our perverse Western generation is like those children of the Jewish market-place who would neither dance with the pipers nor lament with the mourners. It has distorted past credibility its own natural religion—I mean Christianity. It superciliously refuses to receive from the meditative East the teaching which makes Western ambitions seem so petty. It brands as outworn garments, "Mediævalism," those sporadic appearances of the true faith among monks and nuns and kings of the European realms. It asks for some one to rise up and teach in a dialect that is understandable of the people, less alien to Western thought than the form in which Eastern teachings are clothed. It asks for some prophet who will take the West as it is, and lead it by its prejudices, through them, to truth. Thomas Carlyle is just such a prophet. In his case, Father Abraham would seem, for once, to have relented, in order to send to men just the teacher they could follow. Carlyle speaks to the matter-of-fact West in no outlandish jargon. He has no fine dogmas—of Karma and Reincarnation—for which he is proselytising. He does not startle the busy West by telling it to stand still in order to contemplate and behold the power of God. He does not glorify a distant East that seems squalid at the expense of a present West that knows itself luxurious. He speaks to his contemporaries and to us in exactly our own terms. He drives us, who are absorbed in outward action, more energetically into action: he does not say stop working, but he says "man's actions here are of *infinite* moment to him, and never die or end at all." And with all sincerity, he urges men to act vigorously: "Produce! Up! Up! Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do,

do it with thy whole might." Yet his generation does not heed him. And Father Abraham grimly repeats the old words: "neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

One would think that those who halt at Carlyle's message, might, at the least, believe him "for the very works' sake." By works, I mean, of course, the great aggregate that is made up of many single acts and words and thoughts—a man's life. Who, but those wilfully blind, can behold, unmoved, the fascinating picture of Carlyle's life, and the splendor of his achievement? Carlyle rubbed away at the dull facts of actual environment until through them he made the Ideal shine. His life is thus a tissue shot with gold. His biography shows the commonplaceness of life heightened to romance. What humor plays around the affectionate mother, who takes two days from her milking and washing to write her admonitory letter to the son in Edinburgh. "Mind your chapters, Tom," she writes, "and when you have finished the Bible, read it over again." What a catastrophe when Tom, that darling boy, makes a short trip to the dreadful French capital! Margaret Carlyle closes the blinds, and darkens her house, represses all laughter and levity in the family, and the little Scotch cottage enters upon fasting and prayer for Tom's preservation from Parisian wickedness. Carlyle felt a little squeamish about sending home the translation of *Wilhelm Meister;* but his mother was too saturated with Old Testament harlotries to balk at modern Aholahs and Aholibahs. How quaint that family circle assembled to determine "Tom's" future. The child at seven had been reported "complete in English" by the Ecclefechan Mentor, and the family was rash enough to deliberate before taking the next step for the boy. Relatives and village friends shook heads and fingers, for the parents' words and looks, guarded as they were, showed desire, on their part, that the lad should have more "learning;" which the gossips of Ecclefechan declared would ruin him. But the prayerful father and mother gain their desire, and start the boy on the pathway of "learning" that leads to the Kirk. How brave the ninety mile walk of that thirteen year old boy to "learning"—to the university at Edinburgh, on home-made cheese and bread!

There is an impulse in all of us that drives some backward to a far-off Golden Age in the Past, while others it sends afield, to seek in alien lands, fairer manners and purer customs. Thus, if we are Americans, we turn away from present-day noise and vulgarity, to follow the lure of milder life in Italy or England. Or, if we are middle-aged, and life is prosaic, we turn, with longing and regret, to the romance of childhood, reading children's books with delight in fairy lore. But if we succeed in reaching the ivoried satin of Elizabeth's England and Lorenzo's Firenze, we discover that the companions we have long sought, and to whom we have now joined ourselves, are, in their turn, aloof from their fellows, and are journeying backward toward a remoter past and to vanished treasure. "The age of the Saints," we

exclaim, thinking of Dante and Francis and Catherine. Yet, Dante, in anguish, mourns for the time before Constantine made the "great donation." Skeptics and scoffers call this impulse "the fallacy of the elsewhere." But it is genuine aspiration, not fallacy. And, in time, if we are persevering, we discover that the "elsewhere" we seek, though it is an

untravell'd world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when we move,

is, nevertheless, close at hand, and that the entrance lies within us, through gates of gold. So, too, with the romance of childhood. We feel as we read those enchanting books, that it is not actual childhood that is pictured and that these books are not for any children we know; for the children we know all desire to be "grown up." If our longing for enchanted youth is sincere and deep, the truth comes to us that our true ideal childhood is a thing not past but of the future, when we shall have returned from exile to the happy home-circle of our Father. Carlyle's experience at Edinburgh illustrates this universal truth. Some of us, to-day, wonder at the superficiality and stupidity of American educational institutions; we can find very little in their methods and curricula that justifies the name educational. With eyes directed across the water we allude to riper and wiser culture. Yet Carlyle's words about the University of Edinburgh, a century ago, startle by their similarity to the words that some of us are now saying about American universities. "We boasted ourselves a rational university; in the highest degree, hostile to mysticism; thus was the young vacant mind furnished with much talk about progress of the species, Dark Ages, prejudice and the like." Yet, because he sincerely desired wiser teaching than that given by the university, Carlyle found it—within him; as we may all find our Golden Age or ideal (whatever it is) within the spacious inner realm.

Until 1830, Carlyle's outer life was a testing and a struggle. Inwardly he had already won victories. But he was not able to bridge over the inner and outer life until he set to work upon *Sartor Resartus*. In the years up to 1830 he tried school-mastering, law, and finally magazine-writing. For a time the "Kirk" had seemed his aim; but the deepening of his religious life led him away from it, and finally, through an omission to leave a written sermon and a candidate's fee with some theological secretary, his postulancy ended. There was no scandal or heresy complaint. He quietly dropped from the ranks, unnoticed save by those at home. He struggled successfully against poverty and almost constant ill-health. He read much in French literature, and from that began to study German, led by Mme. de Stael's book *L'Allemagne*. He made the acquaintance of Jane Welsh, directed her reading and thinking, and later married her. His acquisition of the German language and literature became his stock in trade, and for ten years brought him in whatever money he had. For magazine editors and publishers, he made trans-

lations of German Romances, and wrote biographies of German authors. In a period of temporary prosperity he was married to Miss Welsh who admired and loved him. They tried life in Edinburgh, but finally, were driven by the "wolf" back to a dreary little moorland estate that Miss Welsh had inherited from her father. Here he continued to write articles, helped along in their publication by Jeffrey of the *Edinburgh Review* who was a relative of the Welsh family. The thing that attracted Carlyle in German literature was the mystical element—especially the symbolism of Goethe's *Faust*. In his essays he endeavored to direct the attention of his countrymen to this spiritual content of the German writers. His realisation of the inward sphere of things, his belief in the infinite nature of duty, all his teaching is found in these early essays. But it is not expressed in the characteristic and vivid form that he later made for himself. His style is still, from the editor's point of view, perfectly "safe." But his writing would be "safer," if the expression of that mysticism were qualified, if the religious ardor were modified, if greater regard were given to the political interests of the hour. Jeffrey was going to retire from the *Review*. His recommendation would be sufficient to place his successor. He felt very friendly toward Carlyle. Carlyle was miserably poor. Jeffrey told Carlyle of his good intentions, and advised Carlyle to place his great talent at the service of the party that controlled the *Review*. To persist in writing about mysticism, Jeffrey urged, would be mere selfishness. Similar offers, temptations, came to Carlyle later, always at periods of great financial strain. His reply was always the same: "If I had but two potatoes in the world and one true thought, my duty would be to exchange one potato for ink and pens, and to live on the other till my thought was written."

Sartor Resartus was Carlyle's task from 1830 to 1833, first to get it written, then to get it published. Essentially, it is as clear as any other writing on spiritual wisdom, and, also, just as unintelligible. The fact that many deem it "mad" is due to Western methods of education, which give to all people the ability to recognize written words while they remain altogether ignorant of the truths which those words symbolize. Like other spiritual treatises, the book *Sartor Resartus* is concerned with two things: to set forth the wonder and beauty and immortality of the inward sphere of things and to point out to aspirants the path that leads thither. It is written from the heart, it is the experience of one who had travelled the path. It is, therefore, profoundly religious, and will illumine for any one who studies it with sincerity the two great duties of life—toward God and one's neighbor. But, though the ground-thought and plan of Carlyle's work is familiar and simple, one very large element of the book makes it, to many not only obscure, but also, offensive. This element is its humor. Carlyle "is a humorist from his inmost soul; he thinks as a humorist, he feels, imagines, acts as a

humorist." Sport is the element in which his nature lives and works. During the period of preparation, he had written sober and serious essays that could shock not even the gravest of men. But with the attainment of full vigor there comes mirthful frolic. He takes those facts of spiritual science which he wishes to communicate, and embales them in the most fantastic wrappage. He frolics with tumultuous, grotesque pleasantry.

It was his own progress and mishaps along the Path that Carlyle wished to describe. At first, he tried to put this experience in the form of a novel, but, after a few chapters, that plan was abandoned. Then he wrote a long essay, calling it *Clothes,* "a mad thing glancing from heaven to earth in satirical frenzy." His strange title was suggested by a simile in one of the Psalms: "They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." That essay was unacceptable. He took it back from editors, revising and enlarging it. The present Book II of *Sartor Resartus* is the autobiographical material that was to have formed the novel. It describes Carlyle's struggle and victory. In Book III, there are set forth his beliefs about government, nature, society, the Church, in a word, man's duties. The first book serves as introduction, and is a piece of delicious foolery. Carlyle is well known as a critic and biographer of German authors. In this capacity, he makes mention of a queer volume that has come to him from Germany, presented by its author, a book that treats of *The Philosophy of Clothes.* Carlyle gives many extracts from the book, some grave, some whimsical, to show what an unusual volume it is. These extracts are interspersed with his reminiscences of the author who is a "Professor" of "Things in General" at a German university. Carlyle's own comment on the Professor and the book runs playfully along with these extracts and reminiscences. He takes the reader into his confidence, and acknowledges that the larger part of the book is mere rubbish, "a mad banquet, wherein all the courses had been confounded, and fish and flesh, soup and solid, oyster and sauce, lettuces, Rhine-wine and French mustard, were hurled into one huge tureen or trough." Nevertheless a vein of gold runs through the waste, and Carlyle undertakes to dig out this gold for others. But, as he proceeds in the study of the volume, its contents grow more difficult, almost enigmatical, and he feels that for further understanding of the work, some knowledge of the Professor's life is needed. Just at this point, certain biographical material, promised by a friend of the Professor arrives from Germany and comes into Carlyle's hands. But to his great disappointment and perplexity, this biographical material is nothing but unarranged scraps of notes, bundled, without any arrangement into six paper bags, that are marked with Zodiacal signs.

Thus ends the first book which is introductory. The second book is Carlyle's spiritual autobiography. The bare outward facts of material existence are not given. Instead, there is the much more interesting record of what he made of outward facts—their spiritual import. Take the matter of birth, for example, and the genealogical data therein involved in an ordinary biography. Carlyle makes his birth a much deeper thing than that: it is not a thing of flesh and blood but a separation and descent, as it were, from the true Father in Heaven; it is a loan to foster parents—(our foster mother, earth, Wordsworth says)—and will in time be required back again with recompense or penalty. This descent of spirit into matter he symbolizes in the child Gneschen who is left by the mysterious stranger in the home of Andreas and Gretchen. A second chapter is entitled 'Idyllic." It pictures the period and condition that Wordsworth has familiarized, when the soul sees its own celestial light reflected from all things. Carlyle drew in, as Wordsworth had done, the beauty and wonder of the divine world of Nature through the outward forms of meadow, tree and brook. "Thus encircled by the mystery of Existence; under the deep heavenly Firmament; waited on by the four golden Seasons, did the child sit and learn. Nevertheless, I were, but a vain dreamer to say, that even then my felicity was perfect. I had, once for all, come down from Heaven into the Earth."

The mysterious child Gneschen must go to school. So he leaves the paternal village, its sunsets, orchards, swallows, and stage-coach, and goes, as the boy Tom had gone, to hide-bound Pedants and mechanical Gerund-grinders. "They knew syntax enough," he writes; "and of the human soul thus much: that it had a faculty called Memory, and could be acted on by appliance of birch-rods." While still at school, Purgatorial discipline began for the boy, with the death of foster-father Andreas. It continued through many years. The boy, grown man, had to surrender his god of tradition, had to surrender his faith in human friendship, to acknowledge that the flower-gilt earth of his childhood was an ash-heap, and man a desolate waif; not until he had thus abandoned trust in every created thing, did he at last find God and a world of sunshine. The pressure and strain which leads up to complete renunciation form The Sorrows of Teufelsdröckh. It is a dark period and full of pain, but even that gloom, as in the case of Job's testing, is shot through with rays prophetic of light: "Never till this hour had he known Nature, that she was One, that she was his Mother and divine. And as the ruddy glow was fading into clearness in the sky, and the Sun had now departed, a murmur of Eternity and Immensity, of Death and of Life stole through his soul; and he felt as if Death and Life were one, as if the Earth were not dead, as if the Spirit of the Earth had its throne in that splendor and his own spirit were therewith holding communion." With renunciation, the fierce struggle ends in joy. "Sweeter than

Dayspring to the shipwrecked in Nova Zembla; oh! like the mother's voice to her little child that strays, bewildered, weeping in unknown tumults; like soft streamings of celestial music to my too exasperated heart, came that Evangel." Splendor and radiance again shine from earth. Earth is not a charnel house with spectres. The Universe is not a machine; but Godlike, and my Father's. From the god of tradition Carlyle has come close to God, and stands ready to enter within the gates of the "Sanctuary of Sorrow."

The third book of the *Sartor,* is a return to the original German volume on the Philosophy of Clothes, which, now, thanks to the illumination shed by the facts from the life of the author, is more intelligible to an English public. That scheme is a play of Carlyle's humor. The third book is really Carlyle's convictions about things in general. It is the view of the universe and man's place therein that opens before him, after his conversion. Thus a chapter on "Church Clothes" suggests that the religions which at various periods appear in the world are only vestures that are worn by the immortal Body of Religion. The thirty-nine Articles of the Prayer Book, he calls articles of wearing apparel. Then a chapter on Symbols suggests that all visible things are but types and symbols of real things unseen—that the Universe is one vast symbol of God. So through this third part, in which Carlyle's humor plays as freely as it does in the other parts of the book, he sets forth, with much eloquence, and varied illustrations, his central teaching—that all forms whereby spirit manifests itself to sense, whether outwardly or in the imagination, are clothes. "These limbs, whence had we them; this stormy force; this life-blood with its burning passion? They are dust and shadow; a shadow-system gathered round our Me; wherein, through some moments or years, the Divine Essence is to be revealed in the flesh."

The simplicity and clearness of Carlyle's volume must be evident. Briefly the first division is an incentive, it awakens curiosity and desire. Then in a very artistic way, that curiosity and desire are prolonged, while being, in a measure, gratified, by the picture of the soul in its struggle along the way. Finally, in the closing section, the soul has brought itself to look fixedly on Existence, till one after the other, earthly hulls and garments have all melted away and the interior celestial Holy of Holies lies disclosed.

The directions Carlyle gives for advancement along the path are very simple and very familiar. In fact, it is their simplicity and a certain antediluvian character that makes them unattractive to many moderns—they are harsh to the pruriency of curious ears. In the first place, he says that man's first duty is Obedience, and that in all questions of Obedience it is safer to err by excess than by defect: "too early we cannot be trained to know that Would, in this world of ours, is as mere zero to Should, and for most part as the smallest of fractions even to

Shall." And he adds that without obedience no one can be free. What more unpopular teaching could be given to men and women who glory in asserting their own independence of all things? When the primary lesson of Obedience is learned, man is already on the path with an infallible guide leading onward step by step. He has only to obey, to accept the duty that is nearest, that he knows to be a duty. In doing that his second duty will become clear. Then, Carlyle thinks, man will be ready for the lesson of Renunciation with which Life, properly speaking, can be said to begin. By renunciation he means exactly what is meant in ancient teachings, in the Katha Upanishad, for example. It is not the surrender of all things to blankness; it is merely giving up one thing in order to gain a better thing—a point of light to win the illumination of a whole ray. Renunciation means only the wise choice of "the better" in place of "the dearer." "There is in man a higher than love of happiness: he can do without happiness, and instead thereof find blessedness."

Carlyle's convictions, after his conversion, about things in general are interesting even though these, too, have a certain ancientness about them, and are not at all novel. History, he believes, can only be understood in connection with Theosophy and from the standpoint of Theosophy. "Facts," he says, "are engraved Hierograms, for which the fewest have the key"—a sentence that brings to mind Emerson's dictum that "Time dissipates to shining ether the solid angularity of facts." Carlyle knows that in the case of the individual, outward facts are merely lessons arranged for the soul's learning. And when individuals form a nation, history arises; it is the essence of innumerable biographies. The bigger facts of nations and races are in no sense fortuitous, but are the footprints of Him who moves before his creation guiding it home. The unit of events which makes up a nation's life, and which men of materialistic beliefs, study as political history, religious history, history of manners and customs, of art and science, will never be understood through mechanical analysis and division. The truth of those events will be revealed in one way only: that is, though it seems audacious to say it, by seeing history as God sees it, by becoming one with the silent soul and sharing its knowledge.

Carlyle's attitude toward religion has already been suggested when it was said that he regards the world religions as vestures worn by the unmanifest spirit of Religion; "some, with a transient intrinsic worth; many with only an extrinsic." His feeling toward the religions of which he knew anything is splendidly theosophical; it is not only tolerance, it is sympathy and admiration. No one has gone so deep into Dante's heart as this Scotch dissenter. Who else has so pushed through the alien and repulsive elements of Mahometanism to the sincere heart of the Prophet who in his day found out God. "That gross sensual Paradise of his; that horrible flaming Hell; the great enormous Day of

Judgment he perpetually insists on: what is all this but a rude shadow, in the rude Bedouin imagination, of that grand spiritual Fact, and Beginning of Facts, which is ill for us too if we do not all know and feel: the Infinite Nature of Duty? That man's actions here are of *infinite* moment to him, and never die or end at all; that man, with his little life, reaches upwards high as Heaven, downwards low as Hell, and in his three-score years of Time holds on Eternity fearfully and wonderfully hidden." Then Thor and Odin and all the Hyper-Brobdignagian business of the North! how vivid Carlyle makes that "strange island Iceland, burst up by fire from the bottom of the sea; towering up there, stern and grim, in the North Ocean; with its snow jokuls, roaring geysers, sulphur-pools and horrid volcanic chasms." Carlyle makes that far-off half-savage life humane and gentle of heart. Because he was truly tolerant, and was genuinely sympathetic with the heart of truth enclosed in the shells of foreign religions, he was entirely loyal to that form of religion in which he was born, and a zealous defender of it as the natural and best religion for the Western world. To him Christianity is the vesture in which the Eternal Religion has manifested itself to the Western world. It would be folly and error to attempt to substitute that natural manifestation by some other Religion that is, in its turn, natural to and suited for certain conditions and races, but is alien to the races of the West. Carlyle knew the difference between organic and mechanical unity, and was never led astray into futile efforts to construct a geometrical brotherhood of man. Difference of material and style in coat and trousers does not hinder brotherliness between individuals of a family; they do not need to wear machine-made garments cut out of the same piece of cloth. Neither does a difference of style in the religious vesture cause separateness. Therefore Carlyle, as he did not endeavor to force his style of coat upon others, likewise did not endeavor to put on their coats instead of his own, which was just as well made, and just as good a fit as theirs. He was a devout Christian, was content, and proud of his creed. "Various enough have been such religious Symbols, what we call *Religions*. If thou ask to what height man has carried it in this manner, look on our divinest Symbol: on Jesus of Nazareth, and his Life, and his Biography, and what followed therefrom Higher has the human thought not yet reached: this is Christianity and Christendom; a Symbol of quite perennial infinite character; whose significance will ever demand to be anew inquired into, and anew made manifest."

It is Carlyle's convictions in regard to things political that turn most men away from his teachings. Something of his beliefs in regard to the reality of the unseen world they might share. But his attitude toward movements in the outer world casts doubt upon the validity of his religious doctrines. Other men have differed from the leaders of thought and action in the affairs of this world. But Carlyle differs so

diametrically, so unreasonably, that his views seem only madness; and the religious teaching that one might have accepted as the vision of a seer becomes discredited as the hallucination of a maniac. There was not one of the "progressive" movements of his century for which Carlyle had any word but censure. The democratic Paradise on the other side of the ocean seemed to him an illustration of his words that "Democracy is a self-cancelling business with the net result of zero." Parliamentary deliberation was only national palaver. Slave emancipation, the great boast of the century, brought him no glow of feeling. He actually was mad enough and shamelessly inhumane enough to say he did not disapprove slavery. He is a destructive critic; he condemns political systems and reforms, yet he can suggest no improvement upon existing conditions except a vague sort of hero worship that centers upon an ideal and altogether undiscoverable ruler. That is the usual verdict upon Carlyle as a statesman. It is not fair. Carlyle is not outspoken as to his beliefs, but he is not therefore vague. Indeed his very silence may be full of meaning if one can, through sympathy, divine his thoughts. On the subject of government he says "numerous considerations, pointing toward deep, questionable, and indeed unfathomable regions" present themselves. He resolutely abstains from speaking of such unfathomable things. He suggests that the true ruler will be a King, an able man "to whose will our wills are to be subordinated, and loyally surrender themselves, and find their welfare in doing so." Such a relationship, between King and people, would seem that between an aspirant or disciple and his Master. Carlyle was a great student and scholar. Is he thinking of old stories he may have heard—of days and lands where Kings were Adepts who were guiding humanity toward its goal? If he had those old, old days in mind he is surely even more behind his times than his most virulent opponent would declare.

It was a saying that Carlyle often repeated that great men are, at heart, alike; they are powers. The form they take in the world is according to the needs of the epoch. The vesture does not limit the power. Thus, the Poet is Politician, Philosopher, Warrior as well as Poet, and could, if necessary, shine in any of those capacities. Carlyle has presented several aspects of greatness—the prophet, poet, priest, man of letters, etc. If the endeavor were made to class him under any one aspect there would be difficulty. For he is prophet and poet, he is a man of letters and also a priest. Perhaps some would say he is too large to come under any single aspect of greatness, and would prefer to think of him quite plainly as the Hero, one who lives in the inward sphere of things.

C.

LETTERS TO FRIENDS

IV

DEAR FRIEND:

I HAVE your letter. Truly, as you say, it is not very consecutive, and yet I think I understand better than you believe. Let me see if I can make my understanding clear.

You were disappointed yesterday. It had not been easy for you to come. You had had to plan and contrive and sacrifice to make the time. But your problems pressed heavily, and you felt you *had* to come. So you came, and came with gladness and hope and gratitude in your heart that there were friends to whom you could come and whose counsel you could trust. But, having come, you found others came also, and instead of the intimate talk you had hoped, and the inspiration you had many times received, you found now only what seemed to you the trivialities of social intercourse.

You felt your need was plain and must be known. Again and again it seemed to you there were opportunities which might have been taken to give you the time alone with your host which you craved, or at least to lead the conversation to deeper and more vital themes. But no such lead was followed; and at last, weary, disappointed, pent-up and constrained, you left, saying to yourself that of course it had to be so, but in your heart feeling that it might have been, and that it ought to have been quite otherwise. And as you went home, your problems still unsolved, this feeling grew within you, and with it some bitterness and resentment. Your mind began to talk to you and question. It told you you were a fool to trust in others, or to look outside yourself for help. It pointed to all the sacrifices you had made, and asked to what profit they had been. And wearily you listened, and thought it was clear that you must work out your own salvation, and that it was meant your need should not be met.

Your letter says none of this. But is it not what was in the shadows of your mind as you wrote?

I remember when, very many years ago, such a disappointment had first been mine. It happened to me not once but continuously, day after day for weeks. And all that your mind has whispered to you, my mind had told to me, treacherously and covertly, always ready to deny what it had spoken, but leaving its poison none the less. I felt myself overburdened and alone, my need unanswered and my prayer unheard. Then one day there came to me a friend, who comes and goes unannounced, and stood and looked at me. His eyes have a strange power. For as he looks you seem to look with him, and to see with his

vision rather than your own. They are very calm eyes, still and dark, but in their depths there is flame, and this flame lights all he looks upon, and one sees beneath the shadows. So he stood and looked, and I looked with him till I could bear no more. Then he sat and talked with me.

I do not remember what he talked of first; for the lesson that his eyes had taught me still held my thought. We can ourselves know but little of our own need, blind as we are to what lies within our hearts and in the background of our minds. But this we can know: To those who have sight and hearing no need is unseen, no prayer unheard or unanswered.

"O ye of little faith!" The past weeks came before me, each day an accusation. Persistently the very substance of my prayer had been offered me and as persistently refused, because it was the substance and not the form of my imagining. Within the form of the denial the gift itself had been made. Day by day there had been acted out for me the solution of my problem, while day by day the deliberate denial, I had thought due to circumstance, was pressing me from my wrong attitude toward it. Could I only have seen! Why had I not seen?

Here, once again, I met my friend's eyes. And again the answer was plain. I had not believed, nor trusted. I had been absorbed in self, though to my thought my care had worn a different guise; and I had been so sure of the kind of answer that my prayer demanded, that I would take none other. I had been like a beggar, spurning gold who had asked for copper, and who knew not the measure of his own need for lodging and for food.

Then my friend smiled, and rose to go. But with his smile the last vestige of my self-pity left me. The windows had been thrown wide and the clean air and wholesome sunshine let in. I, too, smiled and told him I had not heard one word he said. But I knew, as I spoke, that neither then nor through all the past weeks had there been any need for words. The difficulty and obscurity had not lain in my problem, but in the mists of fear and doubt rising from my anxious brooding on it.

Now the point of this story is not that we never have need of words. Very often we have. And when we have, or when we think we have, then we should ask quite simply and directly for what we want. But if our request be denied, or if circumstances make it impossible of fulfilment, then we should look within the denial and within the circumstance for their guidance and their lesson. Circumstances are never barriers, but always opportunities, and denial can never go deeper than form.

In the deepest and truest sense the occultist must always be an opportunist. The "small old Path that leads to the Eternal" lies through circumstance at every step. As Emerson has said, he who

travels in it "is like a ship in a river; he runs against obstructions on every side but one; on that side all obstruction is taken away, and he sweeps serenely over a deepening channel into an infinite sea."

Far inland and hedged about as our lives are, we forget that it is the river's banks which keep the channel open. Without denial our aspiration would be too shallow to bear us to its goal.

But I mean far more than this when I say that if we are to travel in the Path of Discipleship we must become opportunists, in a sense in which that word is rarely used but for which it may stand for lack of a better. We have to get away from the thought of barriers of any kind, or the possibility of denial. We have to see all things as opportunities, and learn the spiritual alchemy which transmutes the humblest and the basest metals into gold; which takes the common incidents of daily life, pain and gladness, work and play, success and failure, the smile of a friend or the slight and injury of an enemy, and distils from each and all food for the soul's growth, wisdom for its training, and power for its work. We have to learn to see circumstance and all that comes to us as coming from the Master, bearing the gift of his love for us, shaped to meet the need to whose depths he sees and for whose fulfilment we have prayed. We have to learn to recognize in circumstances the answer to our prayers.

I should like to make this as plain as I can. Once we have given our hearts to the Master, and have prayed that we should be guided and led along the Path he has blazed for us, then we are taken at our word. Our prayer is registered and remembered, and upon the circumstances of our lives its answer is imprinted. Our days sift to us through the Masters' hands. They are the Lords of Karma. Through them the Law is fulfilled. But through them also is fulfilled the Love which underlies the Law. Our Karma is of our own making; the present, the outgrowth of the past, and the future, the outgrowth of the present. But the Law by which this growth takes place, by which one effect and not another follows from a given cause, is not of our own making. Nor is it mere blind retributive justice; an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, as in the old scriptural legalism of the Jews. Rather is it the law of life which brings the lymph to the wound; always healing, always making for health and growth and betterment. It is the outward working of the indwelling principle of Love, of that Spirit of Love which animates all law and which draws each atom of the universe through life after life towards the Divine.

Therefore it is that the Masters are the Lords of Karma, working with it, not against it. When we give our lives to them they do not break the chain of cause and effect, or alter at once all our circumstances. They take our Karma as we have made it. But they take, too, the power of our aspiration and our prayer; and the answering power of infinite compassion is woven by them as a golden thread throughout

the fabric of our days. It is this golden thread we have to learn to see in all things. It runs through all circumstances, however tangled. It is the thread of our teaching, of the lessons the Masters would have us learn. And it is the clue to our lives.

Do you understand now what I mean when I say that circumstances are never barriers? That each contains a gift to us from the Masters' hands,—the answer to our prayers? The trouble is that it is we who forget our prayers, as those to whom we pray do not. We pray for opportunity; but when our prayer is answered we resent it as a burden.

Another trouble is our inattention. We are not so blind as we are self-absorbed and inattentive. Like a man, bent upon pressing affairs, brushing through a crowd and passing by his friends unnoticed, so we, absorbed in self and driven by self-will, push through the incidents of our day and miss the gifts which each one held for us.

Have you never travelled or camped with a man of one idea? The kind of man, I mean, that will set his mind upon a given climb or expedition for the morrow, and then, if the weather is bad or some untoward accident prevents, will do no one of the hundred other things that are open to him (all of which he means sometime to do), but will only sit and mope and grumble and complain, because on this one day he cannot do the one thing he had planned for it? It is the way most of us go through life. When we learn its folly we learn the truth of Christ's teaching: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Or, as it is in the French: "Blessed are the debonair." And for myself I like this latter version better, for it seems more expressive of the disciple's "serene gaiety of heart."

Attention, recollection, detachment. These are our great needs. They are rooted in faith. But as we make them our own our faith becomes rooted in experience. Perhaps we have no less need of courage. For "This is the condition of the battle which man that is born upon the earth shall fight; that if he be overcome, he shall suffer as thou hast said: but if he get the victory, he shall receive the thing that I say."

Faithfully yours,

JOHN GERARD.

Why were the saints, saints? Because they were cheerful when it was difficult to be cheerful, and patient, when it was difficult to be patient; and because they pushed on when they wanted to stand still, and remained silent when they wanted to talk, and were agreeable when they wanted to be disagreeable. That was all. It was quite simple and always will be.—Book of Echoes.

THE BENEDICTINE RULE

Its Historical Importance

IN the first Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul teaches us that "the foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the wise: and the weak things of the world hath God chosen that He may confound the strong." As we look back over the history of men's souls since earliest times, we find periods when the callous materialism, self-indulgence, and deliberate wrong-doing of generations of men seemed to open the flood-gates to forces for evil; and all-powerful tides appeared to be engulfing the last remnant of the faithful who were clinging to the Light which had been entrusted to them. At such a time, a man appears,—or remembering St. Catherine of Siena and Jeanne d'Arc should we not rather say a soul appears,—and, by the self-sacrificing strength of its convictions, by an example of simple and unswerving loyalty to principle and to truth, this soul becomes a center of spiritual force, becomes endowed with that subtle power that makes a leader irresistible, and is the instrument whereby the sons of men can with renewed vigor press on their pilgrimage to become the Sons of God. It might almost be said that history resolves itself into the biographies of such souls as these, because in an extraordinary way they become the keystone upon which future generations can proceed to build. The life-work and times of St. Benedict of Nursia were critical in the history of the early European Christianity, and it is difficult to estimate the importance of this famous Father of Monastic life; so a study of the conditions in which he built up his order is a necessary preliminary to any real understanding of the Rule itself.

Around the year 480, when St. Benedict was born, the last blows were being dealt to the once supreme political edifice started by Augustus Cæsar; and Latin Christianity was tottering under the savage and scornful persecutions of the hordes of barbarians who were overrunning Europe. In the East, theological disputes, which made desolate the sanctuary, were being settled by force of arms; while Zeno, a tyrant who thoroughly dishonored the throne at Constantinople, made no effort to defend his possessions against the barbarians, but robbed and despoiled right and left. Without cessation for thirty-four years, there followed a period of bloody and miserable strife; until finally Justin I in 518 obtained some semblance of order.

In the west, in 476, Odoacer, the leader of the Herules, had torn the Imperial purple from the shoulders of Augustulus, the last Roman Emperor. Successive masses of wild, rapacious barbarians overran Italy, terrorizing the people, and splitting the country into localized communi-

ties, strong enough to hold up their heads against the storm. It is interesting to note in passing that a well-built Benedictine Monastery was always defended by outer walls, and contained a fort and other necessary prevision for self-defense. The nobles headed those localized communities, and were little better than robbers; licentious, unscrupulous, and devoid of any real religion. Germany was entirely pagan, as was Great Britain, where the first Christianity had been stifled by the Angles and the Saxons. France was invaded in the north by Franks; while only a portion of the south was still held fast by the Arian Christians. Spain was completely ravaged by the Visigoths, the Sueves, the Alans, and the Vandals; and though these tribes were becoming Christianized, it was still but a case of pagan beliefs and mythology given a new terminology; for the spiritual significance of the Master's teaching was not yet recognized by such crude and untamed peoples. Christian Africa had also been desolated by Arian Vandals, who, in the name of Christ, and under the leadership of Humeric (478) and his successor Gundamund (484), slaughtered and tortured every Catholic Christian that they could find.

Monasticism had already been introduced into Italy; indeed semi-monastic and eremetical living had existed from earliest Christian times. Jewish history is filled with allusions to hermit life, and life consecrated to God. Moses lived as a shepherd and hermit for forty years, and then for another forty as leader of a people whom he ruled by the laws which God himself gave to them through him,—a tribal religious community. One of these laws deals specifically with those who "shall make a vow to be sanctified, and will consecrate themselves to the Lord," setting forth that "they shall abstain from wine," from shaving their heads, and such like strictures. The Essenes, too, lived a fully organized and closely secluded monastic life, having the strictest kind of a rule, requiring labour, chiefly agriculture, and having many practices strikingly similar to the later Christian orders. Modern scholars commonly believe, however, that these pre-Christian realizations of the monastic idea had little influence on its later extraordinary development. Considering that a tradition susceptible of considerable circumstantial proof exists to the effect that Christ himself was educated an Essene, and that therefore his private teachings of which we know so little must have taken this monastic idea into consideration, it is possible that there was more influence and authority for solitary, contemplative, and ascetic life than has been supposed. Certain it is that asceticism early became prominent in Christian history and that men and women abstained from marriage, from meat-eating, and all intoxicating drink; giving themselves over to prayer, religious exercises, and charitable works. This they did at first in their homes, not in any way withdrawing from their families or avocations. But as the Empire broke up, as the religious persecutions became more severe, we find a tendency towards solitary retirement

becoming more and more universal with those who wished sincerely to devote themselves to discipleship; and by the middle of the third century, especially in Egypt, there were many thousands living in the caves and wildernesses. St. Anthony is commonly called the first Christian hermit, and after living for twenty years a life of absolute seclusion, he came forth to teach clamorous followers his way of truth. There was no organization under St. Anthony, nor any rule; the monks living a semi-eremetical life, and having full freedom to govern themselves as the individual conscience dictated.

St. Pachomius, St. Anthony's famous disciple, was the first to reintroduce a cenobitic or properly monastic community; it being his idea that a confined and secluded life was a bar to man's natural vocations and ability to gain "salvation by works." Provided that these "works" are safe-guarded against self-indulgence and other evils which might arise from them, he advised his monks to take up some regular and congenial task. In order that such a community might run smoothly he introduced a Rule, which tradition tells us was dictated to him by an angel. The story has every mark of verisimilitude, and it is pleasant to believe in such direct inspiration and instruction. Pachomius was sitting in his cell when the angel appeared to him saying, "Since thou hast completed thy discipleship it is unnecessary for thee to dwell here; but come, and go and gather together unto thyself those who are wandering, and be thou dwelling with them, and lay down for them such laws as I shall tell unto thee." The angel here gave Pachomius a tablet on which were written six rules, which had none of the severely ascetic quality so characteristic of the oriental monachism, or even of some of the post-Benedictine orders. The monks might eat, drink, or fast as they pleased, and were to be left entirely without pressure as to their choice. Vigorous and healthy monks were to work, but the weak only according to their ability. The monks lived three together in a cell, and all ate together in common. They slept sitting, with "support" for their heads; and their clothes were prescribed. The angel also ordered that no man be admitted into the monastery until he had passed through a novitiate of three years, during which time he labored for the monks. It can be seen that this Rule was liberal, and gave each individual plenty of liberty to live his own inner life and to regulate his conduct as he pleased. But Pachomius himself was imbued with the austerely ascetic ideal and he threw all his influence on the side of extreme asceticism. For instance the monks' faces were screened by cowls, and silence was required of them at their common meal times. They were also expected to recite Psalms and Scripture while working alone, and to partake of the Eucharist on Saturdays and Sundays. No check was given to the most severe self-discipline, and encouragement was given to those who wished to absent themselves from the common meal by providing bread, water, and salt in the cells. In fact the atmosphere soon became that of

ascetic rivalry, in which the individual could go as far as he liked. The failure of this early form of monasticism in Europe at that time was undoubtedly due to the return to an exaggerated severity which was impossible to the western temperament and climate, and was also, be it noted, in direct opposition to the spirit of the Rule as dictated by the angel.

St. Pachomius' institution lacked entirely any bond of common feeling, any *"esprit de corps,"* which was so strongly emphasized by St. Benedict. When he died in 346, he left nine monasteries for men and two for women. His influence was largely felt in Africa and in parts of Asia Minor up through the fifth century, when the invading barbarians, and after them the newly zealous Mohamedans completely dispersed his followers.

In Asia Minor St. Basil laid down a Rule and founded many monasteries, the first in 356. His Rule is practically confined to methods of ascetic living, as a guide to the monks. He upholds the Bible as the source of all his teachings; much of the Rule consisting of quotations from it with explanations and comments. He believed that a monk's first duty was penance, and he advocates a life of terrible rigor. St. Basil trusted to tradition to establish the discipline of his monasteries, and showed great prudence and wisdom in leaving all details to the superiors,—an idea that St. Benedict thought of the greatest importance. Gradually nearly all the Eastern monasteries accepted the Rules of St. Basil, and down to our present times their inner life has remained extraordinarily stationary; unaffected by the changes in the west, so that through fifteen hundred years practically no modifications of the original mode of living have been introduced.

Coming now to the earliest western monachism, we find St. Athanasius accompanied by two monks Ammon and Isidore, traveling to Rome in 340. All three were disciples of St. Anthony, and they propagated the *Vita Antonii* by translating it into Latin. Asceticism of the Egyptian model became common throughout Italy, parts of Gaul, and North Africa; following the Antonian tendency towards isolation and severe bodily austerities. The more rigorous climate and the utterly different racial temperament rendered this Oriental manner and practice of monasticism unattainable, and by the end of the fifth century the whole monastic institution in western Europe, and especially in Italy, was completely disorganized. The very natural result of an attempt to impose methods contrary to the racial spirit of the West, was that discipline relaxed, the monks became discontented and corrupt, and all the higher ideals were discarded and forgotten. When finally St. Benedict appeared shortly after the year 500, monasticism was practically unknown in Italy, a few insignificant and independent monasteries, each with its own collection of rules depending largely on the Abbot of the moment, being all that remained of St. Athanasius' mistaken effort.

This lack of uniformity caused restlessness amongst the undisciplined monks, the weaker ones exchanging a conscientious Abbot for one more lenient, by moving to neighboring monasteries.

Amidst the savage disorder and almost universal darkness of the time we see in the center of Italy a young noble fleeing in disgust, alike from the licentiousness of Rome and the barrenness of the schools. Into the wilderness he went, burying himself for three years in a mountain gorge, there to prepare himself for his unsuspected mission of revivifying and making possible for the newly developing European, a higher and truer Christian life. There is something majestic in the picture of this solitary boy of twenty becoming by his act of faith a power to move mountains of unbelief and ignorance; yet by means of such can the Lodge continue to pour its benefits on thankless humanity.

In founding a monastic order St. Benedict had both tradition and example to draw upon; and it is certain that his Rule, as we have it, was written after many years of experiment. His first monastery contained but twelve monks, and his Rule, which must have appeared later, provides for Deans to assist the Abbot if his flock be too numerous. Then, too, those who wash the dishes might have assistants under similar circumstances; and twelve platters and mugs are surely no inordinate task for a healthy monk to wash in one day! The founding of the large monastery of Monte Cassino in about 530 probably marks the date of the completion of the Rule in its present form. It is certainly true that St. Benedict had ample opportunity to study all the records of previous orders, but too much weight can be given to this influence, which probably had less effect on him than is generally believed. St. Benedict must have relied chiefly on his own spiritual guidance and instruction, else how could he have infallibly chosen the best from the preceding systems, without ever using an idea that would not have appealed to his peculiar conditions? Subsequent results alone have proved the boundless wisdom and insight of his Rule. That he did derive some modifications from a study of the earlier institutions is, however, undoubted.

If St. Benedict of himself had deliberately set out to found a successful monastic system under all these adverse conditions, he would probably have failed From the ordinary standards of human judgment he had an impossible task to perform;—a characteristic, by the way, of the work accomplished by such special souls and Lodge emissaries. The people to whom he must make his appeal were crude, unbridled, and of a very undeveloped mentality; while the monks, and those who already professed religion, were either corrupted or disgusted by the failure of the religious institution to realize their ideal. What Church there was had long been divorced from any of the inner spirit of Jesus by unending controversies and persecutions. Faith itself was dying out. St. Benedict did not under these circumstances try to give any new idea to

the world, he simply took what already existed and made it over, breathing into it the life-giving breath of Truth. He made the same appeal that his forerunners had made to the two great prime instincts in humanity, of mysticism and asceticism, but he presented them free from mental distortion, clear, from above. He fortified his appeal by himself setting the example of unswerving obedience to his vision, and he exacted a like obedience from his disciples. This obedience is the key-note of his success, for St. Benedict established his first monastery only after the greatest amount of urging on the part of his followers, and with considerable reluctance on his own part to leave the seclusion and retirement of his cave. He had no thought of creating a new order, and must indeed have been surprised and delighted at the growth that followed his foundation. He was the leaven that leavened the whole religious world of western Europe, and just the type of faithful disciple that St. Paul tells us God uses to confound the "wise" and "strong."

The Principles of the Rule

St. Benedict's first idea, once he had consented to legislate a monastery, was to reform the abuses and the scandalous laxity of the existing orders, and hence his insistence on complete renunciation of self-will in all its forms. Obedience was to him the virtue of virtues by which the disciple should reach the Heavenly Kingdom. Obedience, however, did not in any way necessitate bodily austerities, and especially not the spirit of rivalry that had crept into the oriental systems with their ascetic practices. In fact St. Benedict perceived that such asceticism was merely a subtler form of self-will and self-indulgence; taking expression, to be sure, in painful and revolting form, but pacifying under this guise the conscience that would not permit of a more agreeable self-gratification. So St. Benedict forbade singularity of any kind and laid great emphasis on humility. Further to strengthen this position and in order to make a positive and creative attitude in the minds of his followers, St. Benedict introduced a great sense of family spirit, a love for the particular community of brethren to which the monk bound himself; and commanded that there should be a sinking of the individual in the community. In other words the monk is professed for his monastery, and not merely for his order. This was indeed striking at the root of the whole subject, and St. Benedict shows his true appreciation of the higher principles involved. It also shows his genius in being able to make out of the defects in the other systems, points of strength for himself.

The two salient characteristics of St. Benedict's Rule are said to be Obedience and Labor, but Labor is but the logical expression of a perfect and comprehending obedience. Heaven is not a quiescent state, and we are put in this world to *work* out our salvation, to accomplish with the particular talents given us the work apportioned to us. Inner

Obedience cannot mean living in a manner foreign to natural law. And St. Benedict knew that, having started the discipline of Obedience in the heart and mind, physical idleness would be its ruin; so he called upon the greatest disciplinary force for human nature, external labor. This labor could be either manual or intellectual, as best suited the needs and requirements of the monk. In the Prologue to the Rule, a sort of "hortatory preface," he declares his purpose to be the bringing of the individual back "by the labor of obedience to Him from whom thou hast departed through the sloth of disobedience. To thee, therefore, my words are now addressed, whoever thou art that, renouncing thine own will, dost take up the strong and bright weapon of obedience, in order to fight for the Lord Jesus Christ, our true King." The "strong and bright weapon of obedience," what a splendid, stirring phrase! What a strong man's way of looking at a quality too often ignored by the modern individualism.

St. Benedict's expressed intention, then, is "to establish a school of the Lord's service, in the setting forth of which we hope to order nothing that is harsh or rigorous. But if anything be somewhat strictly laid down, according to the dictates of sound reason, for the amendment of vices or the preservation of charity, do not, therefore, fly in dismay from the way of salvation, whose beginnings cannot but be straight and difficult (something which many beginners would do well to consider). . . . Our hearts, therefore, and our bodies must be made ready to fight under the holy obedience of His commands; and let us ask the Master to supply by the help of His grace what by nature is not possible to us."

These are the key-notes of the Rule, the basis on which St. Benedict planned to order the routine of monastery life. It must be distinctly remembered, however, that St. Benedict wrote his Rule for, and addressed it to, the layman and not the cleric. His Rule, therefore, can be accepted, at least in principle, by anyone who so chooses, making such natural and necessary modifications as readily appear advisable for life at home or in the world. Better training by far can be acquired by most in their homes than in the carefully sheltered and guarded life of a monastery. And life in a home governed by such principles as Obedience and Humility will "acquire merit" in direct proportion to the difficulties overcome.

Voluntary submission is the corner-stone of discipline, and there is nothing final in the engagement that bound the Benedictine monk to his brethren. After eight months of trial and examination, and if the novice persevered in his intention to enter the community, he is instructed to draw up in writing in his own words, and proclaim before the assembled monks his "promise of stability, conversion of life, and obedience, in the presence of God and His Saints, so that if he should ever act otherwise, he may know that he will be condemned by Him

whom he mocketh." This is the only vow—to obey the Rule. "If any brother, who through his own fault departeth or is cast out of the monastery, be willing to return, let him first undertake to amend entirely the fault for which he went away; and then let him be received back into the lowest place, that thus his humility may be tried. Should he again depart, let him be taken back until the third time, knowing that after this all return will be denied him." In this way every chance is given to the aspirant not only to make him feel self-reliance and responsibility, but to force him into the position of choosing freely between obedience and faithlessness. If the Rule were too strict, if the outer bonds were too tightly drawn, the monk could not exercise his will to the same extent, and he would lack opportunity to test himself, or to be tested.

Perhaps the severest trial of a religious organization governed by the practice of absolute obedience is that of restraining those in command, and on this head St. Benedict dwells with great minuteness. It had been the custom for the diocesan Bishop to appoint some Abbot to take charge of the monastery within his charge; often an outsider, who ruled according to personal interests or passions. St. Benedict has the Abbot chosen from amongst the brethren of each community. "In the appointing of an Abbot, let this principle always be observed: that he be made Abbot whom all the brethren with one consent in the fear of God, or even a small part of the community with more wholesome counsel, shall elect. Let him who is appointed be chosen for the merit of his life and the wisdom of his doctrines, even though he should be the last in order in the community." This is in direct accord with St. Benedict's ideal of solidarity, besides the fact that it again throws all results on the free determination of the monks. They choose the man to whom they submit in voluntary obedience.

The Abbot holds the place of Christ; and if his government is to be spiritual, he must show in his own person the qualities of a father. He must not only rule, he must heal; not only guide, but support; not only punish, but make himself the servant of all whom he governs, obeying all while each obeys him. The exercise of his absolute authority is limited in that he must consult all the monks assembled upon any important business. St. Benedict specially enjoins that the youngest be asked their advice in addition to the elders, because the Master often reveals His wishes to them. For lesser matters the advice of the principal members of the monastery is sufficient; but the Abbot can never act without advice, though the right of final decision is reserved for him. An Abbot is elected for life unless evidently unworthy, in which case the Bishop of the diocese can interfere.

St. Benedict then proceeds to point out in the clearest words the tremendous responsibility of an Abbot for his flock, and reiterates that he is always and ever responsible to God, whose steward he is. He reminds the Abbot that the power put into his hands comes from God,

like all power His attitude of mind should be that he is the servant of the brethren, to labor for them and to benefit them by both his sweetness of affection and his strength in correcting. "Especially let him observe this present Rule in all things" is St. Benedict's final exhortation—a significant reminder. The ideal of the Abbot that St. Benedict holds is exceedingly high because it requires of a man supreme obedience, not merely the obedience to the will, but the will to obey. The latter can only be brought to perfection through love, and so St. Benedict enjoins that the brethren must be won by love rather than by fear, and that the way to win the love of others is first to love them. Without this power he may be able to win their intelligences, but he cannot succeed in persuading their wills Nowhere is there a finer description, not only of the ideal Abbot, but of the ideal disciple. This one soul, having attained already a certain proficiency in human actions, a certain understanding of the divine life, becomes the center of a community concentrated towards one sole end; and an irresistible force from the union of these wills purified by the spirit of sacrifice, is under his single hand. No wonder that the Benedictine cloister, under St. Benedict and his immediate successors, turned the tide against the profligacy of the Empire and the anarchy of barbarian conquest. The whole power of Rome rested upon perfect obedience and discipline, and the Roman Legion is famous for these qualities. Exactly those countries which discipline won for Rome, were reconquered and newly bound together by the Benedictine Rule of Obedience, after corruption and self-indulgence had broken all restraint and demolished the former institution.

The Rule

The Rule itself, comprising seventy-three chapters and a prologue, can be classed under two main heads: matter pertaining to the spiritual life of the monks, and rules as to the organization, maintenance, and daily routine of the order. Chapters 2, 3, 27, and 64 deal with the Abbot; chapters 4 to 7 contain a list of seventy-two precepts called "The Instruments of Good Works," and minute instructions as to obedience, silence, and the practice of true humility. Chapters 8 to 20 lay down regulations for the celebration of the canonical office, which St Benedict calls "the divine work," his monks' first duty, "of which nothing is to take precedence." Faults and punishments are considered in chapters 23 to 30; the cellarer and property of the monastery in 31 and 32; community goods in 33 and 34; various officials and daily life in 21, 22, and 35 to 57; reception of monks and initiation of novices in 58 and 61; while miscellaneous regulations are treated in the remaining twelve chapters. Concerning the detail of the Rule we can have little to say beyond the statement that it displays discretion, humanism, and the combination of common sense practicality with the highest principles of spiritual living and idealism. The consistency of St. Benedict

accomplishes as much as any single other quality. There are no weak links in his chain, so the chain has held for nearly fourteen hundred years.

As compared to the extreme oriental systems, he is liberal in his consideration of weak human flesh. Restricting the use of meat to the sick, he permits a pound of bread daily, together with two dishes of cooked food at each meal, of which there were two in summer and one in winter. He concedes also an allowance of wine (about a pint a day) to those whose life habit makes it a necessity, but states that it is not properly a monk's drink, and encourages total abstinence if possible. His principle was that the body should be in complete subjection, but should retain its full powers of vigor and usefulness. Many of the Egyptian ascetics ate only two or three times a week, a severe contrast certainly. As to clothing, St. Benedict's provision that habits were to fit, to be sufficiently warm, and not too old, was in great contrast to the poverty of the Egyptian monks, whose clothes, according to Abbot Pambo, should be so poor that if left on the road no one would be tempted to take them. St. Benedict also ordered from six to eight hours unbroken sleep a day, with an additional siesta in summer; and permitted two blankets, a mattress, and pillow. The whole spirit and aim of St. Benedict's Rule seems to have been to keep the bodies of his monks in a healthy condition by means of proper clothing, sufficient food, and ample sleep, so that they could be more fit for the due performance of the Divine Office, and be freed from all that distracting rivalry in asceticism that has already been mentioned. There was, however, no desire to lower the ideal or to minimize the self-sacrifice entailed by entering on this system of monastic life, but rather the intention of bringing it into line with the altered circumstances of Western environment. The wisdom and skill with which St. Benedict did this is evident on every page of the Rule. Bossuet, the celebrated French bishop, who lived in the latter half of the 17th century and who therefore had the fullest historical evidence on which to base his criticism, calls this Rule "an epitome of Christianity, a learned and mysterious abridgement of all the doctrines of the Gospel, all the institutions of the Fathers, and all the counsels of Perfection."

As has been said, the practice of obedience is the very essence of the Rule, and this obedience is a weapon both of attack and defense. St. Benedict compares the spiritual life to an "art or handicraft," and the monastery to a "workshop in which the spiritual craftsmen are busily engaged." In addition, then, to one whole chapter on obedience, St. Benedict gives a list of seventy-two "Instruments of Good Works," which the monk should learn to become skilled in using, and be able to apply when need arises. These instruments deal mainly with interior and exterior mortification, prayer, and charity. Interior mortification includes not murmuring—one of the first expressions of self-will. Ex-

terior mortification not only requires the negative *do not do* this or that, but says "love fasting," and "love chastity,"—a very constructive and positive task to accomplish.

Carrying out his idea of obedience to its fullest extent, St. Benedict devotes Chapters to such considerations as "If a Brother be commanded to do impossible things," and "That the Brethren be Obedient one to the other," "That no one presume to defend another in the monastery," and "that no one presume to strike or excommunicate another." In the first, St. Benedict says that if a task be altogether beyond the ability or strength of the monk, he may then "seasonably and with patience lay before his Superior the reasons of his incapacity to obey, without showing pride, resistence, or contradiction. If, however, after this the Superior still persist in his command, let the younger know that it is expedient for him; and let him obey for the love of God, trusting in His assistance." For the older monks to be expected to obey the younger brethren is also an indication of the radical extent to which St. Benedict carried out this cardinal principle. "Not only is the excellence of obedience to be shown by all to the Abbot, but the brethren must also obey one another, knowing that by this path of obedience they shall come unto God. . . . But if a brother be rebuked by the Abbot, or any of his Superiors, for the slightest cause, or if he perceive that the mind of any Superior is even slightly angered or moved against him, *however little,* let him at once, without delay, cast himself on the ground at his feet, and there remain doing penance until that feeling be appeased, and he giveth him the blessing. And if anyone should disdain to do this, let him either be subjected to corporal chastisement, or, if he remain obdurate, let him be expelled from the monastery." No uncertain terms, these; and a characteristic sample of the direct, perfectly plain, uncompromising straightforwardness of St. Benedict's literary style. The defence of another monk is prohibited, no matter how his motives may be misunderstood, or his actions misjudged. It can readily be seen that objections to the authority of those in command could never be permitted; besides being harmful to the subject, whose trials would be increased by the knowledge that others considered his punishments unfair or unjust.

These examples should give an idea of the comprehensive way in which St. Benedict covers the field of obedience. There are no loopholes left for escape, no equivocation possible. Perfect obedience leads to true humility, which verily opens the way to the Master Himself. "Having, therefore, ascended all these degrees of humility, the monk will presently arrive at that love of God which, being perfect, casteth out fear; whereby he shall begin to keep, without labor, and as it were naturally and by custom, all those precepts which he had hitherto observed through fear—no longer through dread of hell but for the love of Christ, and of a good habit and delight in virtue, which

God will vouchsafe to mainfest by the Holy Spirit in His labourer, now cleansed from vice and sin." This is the high water mark of St. Benedict's aim and ideal for his monks, and in his treatment of the fruits of obedience, under the general heading of Humility, he indicates the spiritual path of the monk, and the heights to which he should strive to reach. Chapter 7 is given to an exhaustive analysis of the steps of humility, which St. Benedict for greater clarity divides into twelve degrees. The above quotation is the summing of the twelfth. "We go up by descending," says St. Benedict, and he uses Jacob's Ladder as a simile; the ascending and descending angels signifying that we descend by self-exaltation, and ascend by humility. The first seven degrees instruct the monk as to inward humility, or humility of the soul; the last five as to exterior or outward manifestations, or humility of the body. Following is a summary of these degrees.

First Degree.—Recollection and fear of God's nearness and watchfulness. We must check all *sinful* desires.

Second Degree.—We must give up to God our own wills, and deny our will. We must check *all* desires. Pride arises from lack of self-control, so we must gain control first.

Third Degree.—We must submit to and obey, for love of God, all those placed over us in command. We must positively give over the *very faculty* of desire—or self-will.

Fourth Degree.—We must bear suffering, injury, injustice, and harsh treatment gladly, and "embrace" trials.

Fifth Degree.—We must confess temptations and sins to our Director, in order to obtain help, advice, and to "create a new heart."

Sixth Degree.—We must be content with the "meanest and worst of everything." We must think ourselves unfit for any good service or undertaking.

Seventh Degree.—Self-abasement in attitude and in speech. We must believe that we are inferior to everyone.

Eighth Degree.—We must avoid singularity or self-expression by doing nothing outside of the Rule,—follow the beaten track.

Ninth Degree.—We must love and practice silence, together with total self-effacement. This degree is the positive aspect of the eighth.

Tenth Degree.—We must shun immoderate mirth, and be "not easily moved" to laughter.

Eleventh Degree.—We must speak (when spoken to) gently, gravely, quietly, humbly, and with few, well-chosen words.

Twelfth Degree.—We must in all our actions comport ourselves as poor sinners, convinced of our unworthiness, with downcast demeanor to show true humility of soul, and ready at all time to humble ourselves in another's eyes.

The monk who can pass through these degrees, arrives at a complete dependence on the Master, who is drawn to him by his great self-abasement; and he will be able to *run* the "way of life," in love and great peace. There is absolutely no reason why these degrees of humility should be confined to the purely monastic life, and every disciple will find them worth attention and study. There is nothing rigorous or hard about this "way of salvation"; and especially are the earlier steps within easy reach of any man. This is the heart and soul of St. Benedict's Rule, and it has the strongest appeal in that it leads the religious straight to the Master Himself. In our day of unbelief and absence of faith it is well to remember that these primitive Christians aimed at no lower ideal than union with the Master, and that they realized their ideal by living just this same Rule. Daily and hourly must be the effort, for only so can the crisis when it arrives be successfully faced and passed. St. Benedict lays great stress on this steadiness of endeavor, especially in regard to prayer. He says that in order really to pray at the specially appointed hours, we must maintain "remote" and constant preparation during the entire day. Without this preparation we are unable to bring all the power and feeling into play that should go into heartfelt prayer. In the "Instruments" he gives these rules: (1) To keep guard at all times over the actions of one's life; (2) To know for certain that God sees one everywhere; (3) To dash down at the feet of Christ one's evil thoughts the instant they come into one's heart; (4) And to lay them open to one's spiritual Father; and (5) To listen willingly to holy reading. The ability to exercise these forms of prayer is fostered by the care of the "heart" on which St. Benedict so often insists, and the heart is saved from the dissipation that would result from social intercourse, by the habit of mind that sees Christ Himself in every one. Thus we have a consecration not only of the life as a whole, but of the daily and hourly divisions of that life; and added to these individual efforts, we have the consecration of the community as a whole in the *Opus Dei,* the public worship, praise, and adoration of the Father and of the Son. In private prayer, St. Benedict lays down no rule. "If any one wishes to pray in private, let him go quietly into the oratory (set apart for that purpose) and pray, not with a loud voice, but with tears and fervor of heart" (chapter 52). "Our prayer ought to be short and with purity of heart, except it be perchance prolonged by the inspiration of divine grace" (ibid 20). This is all that he says, and it is because the whole condition and mode of life secured by the Rule, and the character formed by its observance, lead naturally to the higher states of prayer.

This, then, is an outline of St. Benedict's Rule for the first steps of discipleship. He himself called it the "least of all Rules," and writes in conclusion, "Whoever, therefore, thou art that hasteneth to thy heavenly country, fulfil by the help of Christ, this little Rule which we have

written for beginners; and then at length thou shalt arrive, under God's protection, at the lofty summits of doctrine and virtue of which we have spoken above." For guidance in these higher states the saint refers to the holy Fathers. The Rule is meant for every class of mind and every degree of learning. It can be studied by souls advanced in perfection; and it also organizes and directs a complete life which is adapted for simple folk and for sinners, for the first gropings after light and for "a beginning of holiness." St. Benedict had deep and wide human feeling, and for this reason he appeals to the wavering multitudes of men who would like to be religious, but who lack the courage to commit themselves irrevocably. He does not ask too much at the start, but with infinite skill he opens higher and higher vistas to the progressing disciple, keeping clear before him the vision of the Master as his end and aim.

That such an appeal could not fail to be universal in its effects is obvious. No higher testimony as to the inherent excellencies of this Rule can be adduced than the results it has achieved in Western Europe; and no more striking proof of its inner life is exhibited than its adaptability to the ever-changing requirements of time and place since St. Benedict's day. For fourteen centuries it has been the guiding light of a numerous family of religious, both men and women; and to-day there are over 20,000 Benedictines, supporting 114 secondary schools, and influencing the lives of over 20,000 boys and girls. The essential principle of manual labor alone has produced many of the superb cathedrals, churches and abbeys scattered over Europe, especially in England. "Benedictine erudition" has become a by-word, resulting from the work accomplished in the cloisters.

As to the immediate effect that St. Benedict's work had on the history of his own day, too much cannot be said. The re-establishment of a potent, vital, and sincere ideal, which at the same time was adapted to the race-genius of the West, gave a new direction to the energy of the people. A real religion sprang up within the religious shell of the Church, and an inspiring guide to lead men back to Christ. The result was that many a genuinely religious or spiritually minded man became a Benedictine, because under that Rule opportunity was given him to develop in whatever direction best suited his particular character. The secular clergy were the first to be benefitted by this influence, and they were so purified and strengthened that for a time they seemed to be identified, in the minds of the people, with the monks,—a curious tribute.

In St. Benedict's life-time, as after his death in 543, the sons of the noblest families in Italy, and the best of the converted barbarians, went in multitudes to Monte Cassino. As years went by missionary monks went forth all over the west, spreading both by doctrine and example, peace, faith, a knowledge of the scriptures and secular learning; and above all, the way of light and life as preached by the Master.

Less than a century after the death of Benedict the dismembered provinces of the destroyed Empire were reunited, not by a political machine, but by the bonds of a common faith and a common belief. All the native strength of the invading peoples was turned from destruction into construction, from a purely physical channel into a spiritual channel. St. Gregory the Great was a Benedictine, giving away all his immense wealth to endow six new monasteries in Sicily. St. Augustine and his companions left a Benedictine monastery to convert England, and carried their monasticism with them, laying the foundations for the future tremendous Benedictine institution, that was not even entirely broken by Henry the Eighth a thousand years later. Hundreds of monasteries and thousands of monks spread over all the countries of western Europe, influencing the courts and the people, leading the thought and culture of the period. The conversion of the Teutonic races to Christianity can properly be called their achievement. Scandals and failures there have been, but wherever the principles that guide men's conduct are founded on a love and longing for the Master, there a vitality exists, that rises above weaknesses, and turns back from evil ways to the only true and satisfying source, to the Master.

JOHN BLAKE, JR.

WHY I JOINED THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

"ONCE bodies were offered to flames for man's uplifting. Now souls are bared that men may see the way to grow." It is easy to believe that no one is converted into Theosophy. To tell why one joined The Theosophical Society seems to involve much intimate history of the events which make such a step not only possible but inevitable.

I learned of Theosophy during my first year in Boston. I came in touch with a group of women who take religion as life, comfortably and largely from the æsthetic standpoint. From a maze of elaborate vegetarian luncheons, Temples of Silence, and Swamis, certain fundamental ideas detached themselves and were implanted in my impressionable young mind. The person who had undertaken to "finish off" my education was gravely concerned over my fantastic inclination and discreetly diverted my mind into the more recognized channels of Browning and Emerson. At the end of two years of desultory study I realized that instead of being finished my education had not begun. I had absorbed a number of excellent but ill-assorted ideas in that city of spiritual microbes. My mind felt the need of direction and tempering that cleancut thought would give it. I entered a large university. If I had expected to learn how to study, and how to apply to living the flood of facts and theories that were poured into my bewildered brain I was grievously disappointed. Now and then I would breathlessly consider that if I could only have time to think I could sort out this heterogeneous mass and it would assume a coherent and vital significance. I knew a number of the instructors outside the classroom. The prudent formal theories, backed by weighty authorities, which they droned out in their lectures did not tally with the set of views which they held for themselves. Few fitted the world of thought to the world of fact as I had so vainly imagined. My limited experience in the orthodox church had been the same. Its clergy preached from the expected viewpoint. Personally they had not the faith that brought their hearers together for the message of hope and inspiration that comes from him of profound conviction in the force and reality of the inner life. If then the church and schools stultified themselves one could only build up his code of living from firsthand experience.

After finishing my course at the university I took my place in the world. I soon learned that the coin in greatest circulation was "to amuse" and "to be amused" and that ideals did not pass current. It

did not take me long to overdraw my account. With ragged nerves I began a querulous search for health. While in California the life of the resort hotels became intolerable. I had heard of restful quarters for the accommodation of the public adjoining the community of the Universal Brotherhood at Point Loma, and although I had not since my early schooldays heard Theosophy spoken of except in the sensational terms of the press I had always retained certain ideas from that earlier period—ideas which I had accepted as finally as the law of gravitation. To make these clearer to the mind seemed imperative. Like so many "reasonable" persons I was unreasonably superstitious. I sought this place expecting my position to be immediately sensed and that I should be given Theosophy in all its pristine clarity. My quest was not fruitful.

After another year of spendthrift diversion I went bankrupt. Mine was the usual experience of bitterness and disappointment in not finding in the world of people and things what I sought. It finally came to me to consider the meaning of

"Lo, all things fly thee, for thou fliest Me!"

It might be well to sound the possibilities within myself. I could not find myself more disappointing than others had been. I went into the country. Ranch life, however, is not one of idle reverie. The chastening effect of dealing with one's fellow ranchmen of disarmingly guileless exterior, the wonder of growing life, the combined working of hand and brain, all brought about a normal state of mind and body. But to what purpose? One could accumulate more facts, acquire more accomplishments, gain a clearer insight into the traits, especially the weaknesses, of one's fellows, and by avoiding these in oneself, could gain a certain small degree of power. But again to what purpose? With a simplification of life and an elimination of desires one's sense of values changes. Dependence upon others in times of stress had long since been given up. I knew I had reached the limit of my vision. Continued effort along the same lines would be but revolving about in a circle. That there were far reaching vistas beyond one's present power to discern was evidenced by individuals about one and in the occasional message found in the world of books. There must be some route by which these persons gained the loftier outlook. What could be more worth while than to seek out the way and learn the terms by which one might attempt the ascent!

Notwithstanding their irrational exposition, I had seen a new and powerful force enter into the lives of more than one adherent of the so-called New Thought movement. I decided that it had been inadequately presented on account of the lack of systematic training of so many of its exponents. I determined at any violence to the intelligence to put myself in the required receptive attitude. I was unable to remain

there long. There was something revolting in the prostitution of spiritual powers by the stress put upon material gain. I caught, however, a gleam of gold. The few grains I picked up on the very surface held out a dazzling inducement of the possibilities of mining in the solid reef below the mind. I determined to prospect on my own account. One day I mentioned to a friend that I was studying at philosophy and was at a loss how to gain reliable information relating to Oriental Philosophy—the schools ignored it and the charlatans traded upon it. I was immediately referred to a small group of persons who were making a serious study of Theosophy. I sought them out and was most graciously given such explanation as I could grasp, a number of books, and the address of a more advanced student if I wished further enlightenment. For months my sole interest lay in Theosophical reading. With my varying mood I changed from the expository to the devotional. I daily expected a reaction to follow: that I should reach the limit of the teachings and the same revulsion of feeling would follow that I had always felt for persons and things when their apparent possibilities were exhausted. The revulsion did not come as I had expected. The limitations I found only in myself to follow where the teachings lead.

To each new student, Theosophy, embodying as it does, the sum total of Divine Wisdom, must of necessity present some special phase of its teachings with peculiar force and clarity. Not only must the particular aspect strike the individual with a force all its own, but it must take on the color of his own state of consciousness as the channel through which it flows. In my own case I cannot confess to any revelations of truths through the medium of ecstatic emotion. I was forced to a logical recognition of love or selflessness as a universal, unerring law. I saw that obedience to this law to a greater or less degree was the mark of the great ones who had attained the higher levels which I had discerned when I began my quest; and that it was not only possible for the meanest individual to follow this Path upwards, but that eventually he must do so.

When I say that through reason alone specific truths were made clear by Theosophy I am confining myself to the states of mind with which I am familiar. That there were greater and more potent forces I have not a doubt, but any presumptive speculation on my part would be futile to older students and beginners alike.

To each new and earnest miner in Theosophical doctrines the unearthing of each new nugget of truth must come as a rare discovery. Similar and greater nuggets that have gone through the melting pot, are being given in these pages and in other Theosophical literature by more experienced miners, so I will resist exhibiting other newly found treasures.

There must be many who have spent years of vain regret that they cannot feel the burning ardor of the Christ's love for humanity,

yet recognize it as the highest goal. To such, Theosophy holds out the courage and the means by which the journey may be at least attempted. When once the start has been made, the conviction must follow, that "when things begin they finish."

It would seem that to the sceptical and judicious Theosophy would make a strong appeal. It asks for no submission to authority greater than one's Higher Self, nor for belief in that which one cannot verify for himself. It offers knowledge of the doctrine to him that lives the life. And the life is to actualize those ideals that have been an integral part of the religious training in all times and among all peoples. Unlike the religious of most cults and creeds the student of Theosophy finds that he is neither restrained nor encouraged by arbitrary rules or set conditions. Rather by an acceptance and utilization of the circumstances and duties nearest at hand does he, through the free power of the will, seek to effect in himself that which the church has so long sought to accomplish through organization and authority. He seeks "to stand still amid the jangle of the world, to preserve stillness within the turmoil of the body, to hold silence amid the thousand cries of the senses and desires, and then, stripped of all armor and without hurry or excitement, take the deadly serpent of self and kill it."

To glimpse, even faintly, the significance of "Measure your life by loss and not by gain, not by wine drunk, but by wine poured out," would seem a magnificent achievement; this the teachings of Theosophy make possible of comprehension alike to the simple, and to the erudite.

To gain an ever clearer perception of "I, who saw power, see now love perfect too" is, I believe, why I joined The Theosophical Society.

L. V.

THE GREAT PARADOX*

PARADOX would seem to be the natural language of occultism. Nay more, it would seem to penetrate deep into the heart of things, and thus to be inseparable from any attempt to put into words the truth, the reality which underlies the outward shows of life.

And the paradox is one not in words only, but in action, in the very conduct of life. The paradoxes of occultism must be lived, not uttered only. Herein lies a great danger, for it is only too easy to become lost in the intellectual contemplation of the path, and so to forget that the road can only be known by treading it.

One startling paradox meets the student at the very outset, and confronts him in ever new and strange shapes at each turn of the road. Such an one, perchance, has sought the path desiring a guide, a rule of right for the conduct of his life. He learns that the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end of life is selflessness; and he feels the truth of the saying that only in the profound unconsciousness of self-forgetfulness can the truth and reality of being reveal itself to his eager heart.

The student learns that this is the one law of occultism, at once the science and the art of living, the guide to the goal he desires to attain. He is fired with enthusiasm and enters bravely on the mountain track. He then finds that his teachers do not encourage his ardent flights of sentiment; his all-forgetting yearning for the Infinite—on the outer plane of his actual life and consciousness. At least, if they do not actually dampen his enthusiasm, they set him, as the first and indispensable task, to conquer and control his body. The student finds that far from being encouraged to live in the soaring thoughts of his brain, and to fancy he has reached that ether where is true freedom—to the forgetting of his body, and his external actions and personality—he is set down to tasks much nearer earth. All his attention and watchfulness are required on the outer plane; he must never forget himself, never lose hold over his body, his mind, his brain. He must even learn to control the expression of every feature, to check the action of each muscle, to be master of every slightest involuntary movement. The daily life around and within him is pointed out as the object of his study and observation. Instead of forgetting what are usually called the petty trifles, the little forgetfulnesses, the accidental slips of tongue or memory, he is forced to become each day more conscious of these lapses, till at last they seem to poison the air he breathes and stifle him, till he seems to lose sight and touch of the great world of freedom towards which he is struggling, till

* Reprinted from *Lucifer*.

every hour of every day seems full of the bitter taste of self, and his heart grows sick with pain and the struggle of despair. And the darkness is rendered yet deeper by the voice within him, crying ceaselessly, "Forget thyself. Beware, lest thou become self-concentrated—and the giant weed of spiritual selfishness take firm root in thy heart; beware, beware, beware!"

The voice stirs his heart to its depths, for he feels that the words are true. His daily and hourly battle is teaching him that self-centredness is the root of misery, the cause of pain, and his soul is full of longing to be free.

Thus the disciple is torn by doubt. He trusts his teachers, for he knows that through them speaks the same voice he hears in the silence of his own heart. But now they utter contradictory words; the one, the inner voice, bidding him forget himself utterly in the service of humanity; the other, the spoken word of those from whom he seeks guidance in his service, bidding him first to conquer his body, his outer self. And he knows better with every hour how badly he acquits himself in that battle with the Hydra, and he sees seven heads grow afresh in place of each one that he has lopped off.

At first he oscillates between the two, now obeying the one, now the other. But soon he learns that this is fruitless. For the sense of freedom and lightness, which comes at first when he leaves his outer self unwatched, that he may seek the inner air, soon loses its keenness, and some sudden shock reveals to him that he has slipped and fallen on the uphill path. Then, in desperation, he flings himself upon the treacherous snake of self, and strives to choke it unto death; but its ever-moving coils elude his grasp, the insidious temptation of its glittering scales blind his vision, and again he becomes involved in the turmoil of the battle, which gains on him from day to day, and which at last seems to fill the whole world, and blot out all else beside from his consciousness. He is face to face with a crushing paradox, the solution of which must be lived before it can be really understood.

In his hours of silent meditation the student will find that there is one space of silence within him where he can find refuge from thoughts and desires, from the turmoil of the senses and the delusions of the mind. By sinking his consciousness deep into his heart he can reach this place—at first only when he is alone in silence and darkness. But when the need for the silence has grown great enough, he will turn to seek it even in the midst of the struggle with self, and he will find it. Only he must not let go of his outer self, or his body; he must learn to retire into this citadel when the battle grows fierce, but to do so without losing sight of the battle; without allowing himself to fancy that by so doing he has won the victory. That victory is won only when all is silence without as within the inner citadel. Fighting thus, from within that silence, the student will find that he has solved the first great paradox.

But paradox still follows him. When first he thus succeeds in thus retreating into himself, he seeks there only for refuge from the storm in his heart. And as he struggles to control the gusts of passion and desire, he realises more fully what mighty powers he has vowed himself to conquer. He still feels himself, apart from the silence, nearer akin to the forces of the storm. How can his puny strength cope with these tyrants of animal nature?

This question is hard to answer in direct words; if, indeed, such an answer can be given. But analogy may point the way where the solution may be sought.

In breathing we take a certain quantity of air into the lungs, and with this we can imitate in miniature the mighty wind of heaven. We can produce a feeble semblance of nature: a tempest in a tea-cup, a gale to blow and even swamp a paper boat. And we can say: "I do this; it is my breath." But we cannot blow our breath against a hurricane, still less hold the trade winds in our lungs. Yet the powers of heaven are within us; the nature of the intelligences which guide the world forces is blended with our own, and could we realise this and forget our outer selves, the very winds would be our instruments.

So it is in life. While a man clings to his outer self—aye, and even to any one of the forms he assumes when this "mortal coil" is cast aside—so long is he trying to blow aside a hurricane with the breath of his lungs. It is useless and idle, such an endeavour; for the great winds of life must, sooner or later, sweep him away. But if he changes his attitude in himself, if he acts on the faith that his body, his desires, his passions, his brain, are not himself, though he has charge of them, and is responsible for them; if he tries to deal with them as parts of nature, then he may hope to become one with the great tides of being, and reach the peaceful place of self-forgetfulness at last.

"FAUST."

DO WE THINK IN FOUR DIMENSIONS?

SOMEONE said the other day, of Boris Sidis, the *Wunderkind* of Cambridge, Mass., that he can think in four dimensions. This interested me not a little. For I have long held the belief that, not merely a Boston prodigy, but even a common mortal, may and does think four-dimensionally, just as soon as his thinking reaches a certain depth and clearness, with something of the quality of detachment. It is with no desire to lessen the honors of the young phenomenon, but rather to hearten the rest of us, by showing that we may stand on the same high and inspiring level, albeit born far from the banks of the Charles, that this study is undertaken. Let me, therefore, illustrate what I mean.

Think of a tea-cup. That is a simple beginning, such as Horace recommends in his art of poetry, and should not startle even the timid heart of an old maid; nay to such, a tea-cup should make a special appeal. Very well, then; think of a tea-cup; a plain, ordinary tea-cup will do perfectly well; we are not driven to Dresden ware or Sevres. Think of said tea-cup held up before your face, at the comfortable distance of a foot or two, and, for the sake of argument, with the inside of the tea-cup turned toward your eyes. Visualize your tea-cup. Make as clear a mind-image of it as you can, so that you see it before the mind's eye very much as if it were held in your hand, and held up before your bodily eyes. This power to make a clear mind-image, and to see it clearly, is what I meant, a little while back, by the quality of detachment. The mind-image must detach itself a little from the mind, and stand out clear, like a visible object.

Now, having got our tea-cup properly created in space, and I pass over the miracle of that creation, we are ready to go ahead. Think of the tea-cup, as we said, with the inside turned toward your eyes. Now, quickly, think of the bottom of it. Though it is turned away from your eyes, yet you can see it just as well as you see the inside of the tea-cup. Indeed, you can see both inside and outside at the same time, looking at your mind-tea-cup from two opposite directions. And you can do it without the least difficulty. Indeed, you have done that sort of thing ever since you were conscious of thinking, of considering mind-images, at all.

So far so good, and not at all frightful. Now let us take courage, and try again. Think of a box. Any box will do. Bring your own box with you. Choose your box. Only it must have a lid. We cannot

get on without that; a box at the theater, or even the opera, will not serve our turn. Think, then, oh reader, of a box. Let it stand out, as before, in front of your mind's eye, or eyes, as the case may be. The particular box which I happen to be thinking of, is a brown wicker-work receptacle, lined with quilted silk; a square basket, perhaps, rather than a box. But it will serve. Now you can think of this brown wicker work-box, set in front of your eyes, a couple of feet away; and, for the moment, please think of it with the lid up, so that you can see into the inside; see, in fact, the quilted silk lining, with a pair of scissors lying at the bottom. Now, with your mind's hand, so to speak, for it is just as sensible to speak of a mind's hand as a mind's eye; with your mind's hand close the lid of the box. You can now see the brown wicker top of the lid, as well as the front side of the box. But you can also see the back, and the bottom. Nay, you can also see, and just as well, the inside, with the pair of scissors still lying on the quilted silk. You can see that box inside and out, upside and down, from every point of view; and all this, without thinking of yourself as walking round it, or as turning it over, or opening it again.

Still so far so good. Let us take our courage in both hands, and try again. Think of a room. Do not jump; I mean a perfectly ordinary room; any room; the kind of room you are in now, or that very room. A hall-bedroom will do just as well as a Louis XIV boudoir. Very well, you are thinking of a room. Quite easy, is it not? And not a bit startling or uncanny. Now think of another room, your office, if you happen to have one. Very well. We have got our two rooms. Now how long does it take you, in thought, to get from the one to the other?—to think of yourself first in the one and then in the other? Not very long. Half a second, perhaps; perhaps, if you have one of those quick-acting minds, you can think yourself from one to the other in even less than half-a-second. But that is not indispensable. The great thing is, that you can make the journey; can think of yourself first in one room and then in the other, and then back again, without the slightest particle of difficulty.

Now let us try again. And this time you may jump, if you wish; for I am going to propose something very dreadful; no less a thing than four-dimensional burglary. I did not venture to let that out before. I have been leading up to it gradually; breaking it gently to you, so to speak. Now, are you ready?—and for this kind of burglary you need neither jemmy nor dark-lantern. That is where the full knavishness of its four-dimensionality comes in. So be prepared. Think of a safe. The safest kind of safe you can think of. There is no patent restriction on mind-pictures, so don't be afraid. Spare no expense in your safe; get the best that money can buy,—and don't pay for it. Well, you have thought of your safe. Very good. Begin with it wide open, its grey

insides exposed to your inquisitive view, just as the work-box was, a little while back.

Now look into your safe. Clearly picture the inside. And now lay upon its floor, on a cushion of satin, if you will, a tiara of fine diamonds, big, white, sparkling stones, that would make Shylock's eyes water; add a handful of rubies; add a thousand fifty-dollar gold certificates, done up in ten packets of a hundred each, such as you see at the bank, once in awhile. If so inclined, add a bundle of stocks and bonds, avoiding carefully those affected by the recent slump. But I am not going to make a point of that. I prefer gold certificates, rubies and diamonds. Get them all nicely placed in the safe. Now close the door, carefully, as befits the magnitude of the treasure within; close the door, get the lock properly fixed, and—forget the combination.

That at least is perfectly, even fatally, easy. The more so, in this case, as we did not think up a combination, before closing the safe. So the safe is closed, closed for keeps. And now, be prepared for necromancy. For, even now your safe is closed, locked, and the combination forgotten; even though its sides be six inches thick, of toughened steel, stubborn as the ribs of a Dreadnought; you can yet see inside of it; can see the aforesaid tiara of sparkling diamonds, handful of rubies, and bundles of gold certificates, peacefully lying on its floor, with or without the bundle of stocks and bonds, as the case may be. Lying peacefully inside; peacefully, but not safely; for you now stretch forth your mind's hand, and yank that boodle out of the safe, and lay it on the table before your depraved and greedy eyes. That, by the way, is a four-dimensional personality. Perhaps I should make a four-dimensional apology? Most willingly. I apologise.

But the fact remains. You, the aforesaid reader, did feloniously and burglariously rob the aforesaid safe, of aforesaid tiara, notes and rubies, with or without bonds and stocks. You are caught with the goods. They are there, on the table before you. But that is not the worst of it. You did it without opening the safe, which still remains closed, its melancholy grey insides blinking at you in the twilight. So you are guilty of four-dimensional robbery, with but one extenuating circumstance: that the property stolen belonged to yourself,—at least if there be property in mind-images.

Well, you will say, and I shall not contradict you, there is nothing extraordinary in all this; nothing that you have not done a thousand times before. The thinking, I mean, not the safe-breaking; though many a good man has mentally done that. There is nothing extraordinary in the thinking, you say; and I agree. It is just the kind of thing you do all the time, though you be not a Boston prodigy, or an infant phenomenon from the Charles river. Exactly. It is what we do all the time. That is half my thesis. Now I come to the second part; to prove that this kind of thing is four-dimensional. Be not

affrighted. The worst is past. If you have followed me so far, do not desert me now. The wicked part is over. We shall not burgle any more.

Now, to begin with, imagine a flat man. You cannot? Well, let me try to help you. Imagine an ordinary man of normal proportions. Imagine him laid on the floor. Now imagine the Pres—— I mean, imagine some gentleman of great weight and dignity sitting upon him; sitting so effectually as to flatten him out completely. Between ourselves, I do not think there would be any impropriety in thinking of the flattened gentleman as having the features of Uncle Cannon. That may help some Middle-Western imaginations. But the point is, to get him so completely flattened out, that he has no more thickness than a figure cut out of paper. Indeed, if you wish, you can imagine him cut out of paper, if so be that you get him flat enough.

Very well. Imagine your flat man so permanently flattened, that he can only crawl along the surface of the table, or the floor, perhaps we had better say. Yes, let us have him crawl about on the floor. That will be quite pleasant and nice, for us. Possibly not for him. But who would consult the feelings of a flat man? Not a janitor, certainly. This, perhaps, is a four-dimensional joke. If so, and we are not quite certain, we apologise again. But let us have our flat man crawl about the carpet, or even on the bare boards. Perhaps that would be best of all.

Well, you notice that, when he comes to a line in the carpet, or the crack between two boards, he can only see the side of the line, or the crack, which is nearest to him; to see the other side he has to crawl round, and look at it from the opposite direction. But you and I, oh reader, not having been flattened out, can look down upon the line or the crack, and see both sides of it at once. Well? Does the secret begin to dawn? Let us help ourselves out by the simple expedient of counting. We shall not go far; just one, two, three, and, perhaps, four.

The perfectly flat man, I avoid saying simply the flat man, because Harlem has her susceptibilities, and they must be humored;—the perfectly flat man, then, being kept to the level of the floor, can only disport himself in two directions; in the length and breadth of the floor, that is. He cannot go in for the third direction; that is, height. He is too completely flattened out for that. Now it is the fashion, among infant prodigies and Bostonian sages, to speak of these two directions as dimensions. So they would call our flat and crawling citizen a two-dimensional man. But we, who can also soar, who can add height, the third direction, to length and breadth, are in like manner called three-dimensional; because we can disport ourselves in three directions.

And, just because we are thus masters of three directions or dimensions, we can look down from above on the line or crack in the floor, and see both sides of it at once. But, even though we do thus spread

ourselves in three directions, or, to use the modish term, even though we are three-dimensional, we cannot so look at a tea-cup as to see both sides of it at once; that is, the outside and the inside. We can hold the tea-cup in front of us, and look at the outside; or we can turn it over, and look at the inside; but we cannot take a point of vantage, from which we can see both sides at once. We can, though, in one way; by holding it up before a mirror, whereby we do become able to look at it from two directly opposite points at the same time, and so we see both the inside and the outside at once. But in no other way, in no direct physical way, can we do such a small thing as see the outside and the inside of a tea-cup at the same moment. If we could find a new direction, a point of vantage such as we have, when compared to the flat man, in looking down from above on the crack in the floor, then we could see both sides of the tea-cup at once. We simply need a fourth direction, in addition to length, breadth and height. And a fourth direction is exactly the same as a fourth dimension. So if we could find a fourth direction, or take advantage of the fourth dimension, we could see both the inside and the outside of the tea-cup at once. But that is exactly what we can do, with our think-tea-cup. Therefore, in doing so, we are using the fourth dimension; in our thoughts, that is. Or, in other words, we do think in four dimensions. *Quod erat demonstrandum.* Next, please.

Next came the square basket. Now, for our friend, the flat-man, who is still crawling about the carpet, a square pattern on the carpet would be equivalent to a square basket. More than that, if the square was complete, he could never get inside it, or imagine how anyone else could get inside it. Or, perhaps, he might just be able to imagine it, if he had begun to have three-dimensional thoughts, to think about height as well as length and breadth, though, of course, he would be convinced that there never was such a thing. Well, he could never get inside the four-square pattern on the carpet. For him, it would be a closed box. But we can see inside his closed box, simply by looking down on it from above; that is, by taking advantage of an additional direction, or dimension, besides the two known to him. By analogy, if we could take advantage of a new direction or dimension, in addition to the three we ourselves move about in, we could see into the inside of one of our own closed boxes; see the scissors on the lining at the bottom, without lifting the lid. If we could use the fourth dimension or direction, we could do just that. But we can do just that in thought; did, in fact, do it quite easily a little while back; therefore in so doing, in so thinking, we were thinking in four dimensions. Once more: *quod erat demonstrandum.*

Then again, for our flat and crawling friend, the nearest equivalent idea to a room would be a bigger square pattern on the carpet. If such a square were completed, and he inside it, he could never get out. It would be a dungeon for him, an issueless prison. Or, if outside, he could never get in. Yet, if very imaginative, he might dream of the

possibility of getting out or in. But we, you and I, reader, who have the freedom of three dimensions or directions, can get into his flat room, simply by stepping on that square of carpet from above. If he were inside, and we did that, he would think it an apparition, a miracle, an entering through closed doors. And then, to puzzle even more hopelessly his poor, flat mind, we could step out again by the same way we came in, whereat he would say: vanished! another miracle! Help! ghosts!

But we are no ghosts, you and I, reader; not yet, at least. Yet we can step from the center of one of his flat rooms, namely one square of the carpet, into another of his flat rooms, to wit another square of the carpet, though both, so far as he can see, are closed, sealed, hermetically sealed. And we have done this, without going near the walls, the boundaries of the squares. We have simply used an additional dimension, and done the trick with ease.

Now, could we use yet another direction or dimension, to wit, a fourth, we could get out of one of our own rooms just as easily, without going near the walls, or even passing through floor or ceiling. We could step from the center of one room to the center of another, though both were closed, by thus using the fourth dimension. And, as we did just this in thought, therefore in thought we used, and intend to go on using, the fourth dimension.

Kind reader, our task is almost done. Need we go on to explain our fourth-dimension jewel robbery? Is it not already evident that, for our poor flat friend on the carpet, any square pattern would represent a safe, in which he might put his flat treasures, to wit, one of the roses that adorn the carpet, supposing it could be moved about. But we, still supposing the rose could be moved, could swoop down on it from the vantage-ground of our added dimension, and take it out of the center of his flat safe, without opening the door, or using the combination. If he had a penny, let us say, carefully put by, in a square of the carpet, we could purloin his penny simply by lifting it up, and it would be vanished mysteriously from his world, gone, gone, for ever.

So, if we could use a fourth direction or dimension, we could take the tiara and gold-certificates from one of our own safes, though it were closed, locked, and the combination gone. But this we did, and did quite easily in thought; therefore in thought we used the fourth dimension. We thought, as we always do, in four dimensions; at least, if there is depth and clearness and a certain detachment in our thought, so that it can fairly be said that we do think at all.

All very true; but after all, is there any real fourth dimension, and do we go there when we die? Really, good reader, that is another story.

JOHN CHARLTON.

THE DISCIPLE*

IN all Nature's work there is a gradual laying aside, a replacing of forms of expression. The only thing that endures is what we call "consciousness"; and it is masked in many forms. In the rock, the plant and the animal we find this consciousness present. Indeed there could be no form without its presence, for it is really the form-builder. Its mission is to bring to a state of perfection the numerous personalities, or "masks," which are unfolded along the path of life. Through its consciousness the iron bar is moved to respond to the action of heat, the tree to grow and the animal to exhibit the habits of its kind. Consciousness is somewhat latent in the rock-crystal; in the plant it is more clearly defined; in the lower animal forms it is yet further advanced, in the higher animal, man, it has reached its full development, man is "self-conscious." Next he must reach up to the "conscious Self." Man is self-conscious in that he is "personally conscious," has a sense of personality. He measures all things by this personal consciousness, and so his views of life and being are usually narrow. Were he to aspire to the larger view he would soon find within the depths of his own nature vast wells of force, to be drawn on through his aspiring. When man aspires he grows, for "aspiration" is the wonderful talisman that unseals his wells of growing force.

When personal consciousness becomes the larger consciousness of the Soul then the personal view gives place to the impersonal view, the lower nature is merged in the higher. The lower forms of expression are thus outgrown, laid aside and replaced with higher forms. This is what we call "evolution," the growth and development of the self-conscious man, the unfolding of the latent Soul-powers.

Much is said and written about the "Mysteries" and about "Initiation." These terms are often carelessly used in connection with the pseudo-occultism of the many schools of psychism which have sprung up in our land in the last few years. But that is a perversion of ancient and honorable terms. Let us try, in a simple way, to fix upon some definite understanding of the Mysteries and of their import.

We shall find that there are Lower Mysteries and Higher Mysteries. The Lower Mysteries are the mysteries of earth and of earth-life. The Higher Mysteries are the mysteries of Divinity and divine-life. The Disciple is a student of both the Higher and the Lower Mysteries, he learns to discern between the immortal and the mortal. In this he follows the teaching of Jesus, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God," and

* From a lecture delivered before the Unity Branch of The Theosophical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana.

he knows that "all things shall be added" when the "Kingdom" is found. His "Initiation" leads him into all walks of life, he is taught that he cannot stand aside from the evil in life any more than he can from the good, for the cloak of evil which has fallen on another's shoulders to-day may fall upon him to-morrow. The Disciple must live all lives, must know all things, else how can he sympathise with others?

We must remember that all men are in "The Way of Initiation;" the Disciple alone is conscious of the Way. When we ordinary men are facing our first real temptation, the temptation to do evil for evil's sake, we are really brought to a test in our initiation. We stand before the altar erected unto our higher ideals and the test is our desire. If we stand the test of this moment and turn from the evil desire towards the ideal the test has been successfully passed. If our evil desire triumphs we fail in this test and must await the same test in another form before we can pass on. The Disciple knows that before he is well disciplined he must pass every test that comes to man, and that his self-discipline is his only guard against failure.

So we see that the "Way of Initiation" is really our everyday life and that it does not require a solemn procession of hooded priests to lead us to the altar whereon we make our vows. A procession of thoughts and of deeds is what brings each one of us to the altar upon which burns the fire of his highest aspirations—this is the altar of his inner, ideal Self, hid in the secret shrine which no one else can enter.

It is said of a certain idol that it would flash a clear white light from its eyes when a pure soul knelt before it and a fierce red light when a sinful person came into its presence. There is also hidden within our natures the measure of right and wrong; the white light of peace streams about us when we represent our highest ideals, the fierce red light of passion blazes when our selfish desires are expressed. Alternating, as we do, between peace and passion, we have no better guides to right action than this "pair of opposites." After awhile we grow tired of swinging back and forth between peace and passion and the time comes for us to choose which we will serve, the white light of peace or the red light of passion.

In laying aside his sense-perception as his one guide in life the Disciple finds a new power of knowing: it is spiritual perception. Then to him the immortality of the Soul is no longer a mere theory, but a fact. He learns with this new power to discern between the immortal and the mortal, he enters into the joy of immortal life. He lives the life of the Immortal, using his power of sense-perception in its proper place but not being dependent upon it as a guiding influence. Thus the Disciple reaches the "Gate of Life Immortal" and learns the mystery of the Gods. And here he finds his true place in Nature's school and his true relationship to his fellows. He enters into the Peace of the Master,

and as the Master's power is in His Love, so the Disciple, in partaking of that Love, is invested with its power.

"Before the eyes can see" the path of duty clearly the consciousness must pass through three gates: The one is called the "Gate of Death," the second is the "Gate of Rebirth" and the third is the "Gate of Life Immortal." The Gate of Death leads from the physical plane to the psychical plane; the death of the senses occurs here. The Gate of Rebirth leads from the psychical to the spiritual plane; the rebirth of the senses occurs here, *i. e.,* the merging of them on a higher plane. The Gate of Life Immortal leads into the presence of the Master-Soul. At the Gate of Death the Student lays aside his sense-perceptions as his guide and, passing through, becomes the Novice; at the Gate of Rebirth the Novice lays aside his desire for the satisfaction of the senses and becomes the Disciple; and at the Gate of Life Immortal the Disciple reaps the reward of his self-discipline—he finds his Master; he has spiritual vision.

The worlds of the Higher and the Lower Mysteries may be represented by two circles, one above the other and overlapping it. Where these two circles overlap we may locate the psychical, or intermediate plane. Thus within the two circles we have the three planes, the physical, the psychical and the spiritual. The lower circle represents the "Hall of Ignorance," of which it is written: "In it thou wast born and in it thou shalt die." Where the circles overlap we have the "Hall of Learning;" and we are told not to tarry there, for beneath every beautiful blossom of learning a serpent of self-love lies coiled, ready to strike. The upper circle represents the "Hall of Wisdom," and it is here that we find our spiritual Teacher. To reach this Hall of Wisdom, to become a Disciple, requires awakened aspirations and the courage to apply the rules for disciples to our daily lives.

Let us for a moment imagine the man of sense-perception trying to apply these rules. Being yet a dweller in the Hall of Ignorance and having no inner perception, he of course misapplies them, he applies them to others and not to himself. He sees all the sin and shame of others and none of his own. With his half light how cruel must be his interpretation of the great rule: "Before the eyes can see they must be incapable of tears"!

The Novice, being a dweller in the Hall of Learning, the space where the higher and lower circles overlap, is swayed by contending emotions and is therefore an incompetent judge of the rule. He dwells where the spiritual forces of the higher circle are tending to draw him upward beyond the power of the forces of the lower circle, which tend to draw him downward.

This Hall where the seeker for psychical powers finds himself is a place of many illusions. If we step out of doors after a shower of rain and look into the pools of water by the roadside we see an upside-down

reflection of our world. When we were children we were very much interested in this topsy-turvey world and built some strange theories and wonderful stories concerning it. When a little puff of wind disturbed the pool, and caused a number of wavelets to break up the still waters, we could hardly recognize the distorted and jumbled forms pictured there. So when the Novice first peers into the astral realm he is very much confused, for it is really a water-world, reflecting the forms of this physical world in a topsy-turvey fashion. Its winds are human emotions, and in the stress of great passional storms its "waters" are broken up and its waves run mountain high.

"Before the eyes can see they must be incapable of tears." The Novice, in his application of this rule, considers only his emotional nature, and being a dweller in the "vale of tears" he applies it inversely—he considers this rule as the one most to be avoided. The Disciple knows that he must apply this rule to himself, that before his eyes can see the path leading to the Gate of Life Immortal they must be dry of the tears of self-pity. Thus the consciousness lodged in each hall interprets the rule according to the light of that Hall. The Disciple, alone, knows the rule.

Consider what marvelous changes would follow a strict observance of another rule for disciples—"Before the tongue can speak in the presence of the Masters it must have lost its power to wound." Supposing that you and I should refrain from saying a single word that would wound or offend another, how long would it be, do you suppose, before there would be no unkind words spoken to us? "To the kind the world is kind" is another way of saying, "As ye sow so shall ye reap." When we lose the power to wound others we gain a new and greater power—the power to speak helpful words, and thus being lifted up beyond the power to wound others we shall draw all men to us by our kindness.

Let us pause for a moment and ask ourselves a few questions: Do we really wish to stand in the presence of the Master-Soul? Do we desire to find our True Selves? Do we care to enter into this "Holy of Holies," this inner Ideal Self, and become one with Its divine power and glorious responsibilities? How much of a sacrifice of this lower, personal nature are we ready to make for such a reward?

In the face of what we are pleased to term our "welfare" we are usually governed by our personal desires. "How shall I be benefited?" is our first question. What benefits do we seek? On the physical plane —"Health, wealth and happiness." On the psychic plane, what but the satisfaction of a morbid desire to reach over into the haunts of the dead and to acquaint ourselves with conditions there? The Disciple cares nothing for these, therefore he is not an ordinary man. His desires are for the things immortal and his observance of the rules for disciples leads him to grow into his heritage, "unconsciously, as the flower grows."

We may believe that at this moment we are a long way from disciple-

ship; but perhaps we are not so far away as we think. The moment when one tries to observe the rules for disciples, he begins his discipleship, even though he fails and fails again. And as he lays down his burden of selfish sorrow a new note of joy comes into his life. Many people imagine that the whole duty of the Disciple is done if he sings in tremulous tones and says his "Amens!" loudly and at the right time during the service. But discipleship is more than this; it is the consecration of the personal self to the impersonal Self, the giving up of all personal preferences, the moulding of the lower nature in the image of the Higher; it is to love God with all thy mind, soul and spirit and to love thy fellowmen as thyself.

In our everyday lives we do not hear much about the Disciple, he is modest to a wonderful degree: his general rule is "To will, to dare and to keep silent." To will to do right, to dare to do right and to keep silent the desires of the lower nature so that he may do right. When he can obey this rule he has learned to "stand alone," as all disciples must. Of course to "stand alone" does not mean that the Disciple must climb to a housetop and stand for several hours blinking at the sun, as some people believe, this only happens in some very foolishly written books, never in the life of the Disciple. To "stand alone" means that he has learned to "stand" unmoved by any selfish ambition or personal desire, and of course he must "stand alone" in this—for how many of us would take such a "stand" with him, or even honor his courage?

The things of value in this world, the things which we ordinary people seek after with so much eagerness, are appraised at their true value by the Disciple; and in this he must necessarily be alone. Above all questions the one "How shall I be benefited?" must never be the subject for his thought. Is not this a rigid test of courage? Does it not require wonderful courage to rise above the lure of material values; to place the Soul's value above our common desires? The way of the Disciple is something to grow into, something to attain, and it is only accomplished by working in an impersonal way all the time.

The dweller in the Halls of the Lower Mysteries is called "householder," that is he lives in the "house" of his senses; he marries, looks diligently after his business, enters heartily into the way of the world and is interested only in its works. Usually the "householder" measures his success in life by the returns from his business. The successful man is proud of his success, is proud of the good opinion of his friends. The Disciple is never proud, he looks dispassionately alike on success and failure, on praise and condemnation. It is enough that he works; he cares nothing for results—they belong to the Soul.

The Disciple takes up the cares and duties of the lower planes in an impersonal way, these duties are just as much a part of his life as the duties of the higher planes, and each duty, wherever met, must be performed impersonally, without fear of punishment or hope of reward.

The Disciple's only claim is the right to work, the right to serve the great spiritual Lodge of the Masters.

In the world of business the Disciple misses a great many chances to becomes rich or famous, but he is not an ordinary man and his measurements of right and wrong are not made by ordinary rules. In our everyday world men are not always esteemed according to their inner purity of purpose. So the Disciple is often passed by as unworthy of notice, his way and his standards are not those of the world and so they are reckoned impossible. And yet, he goes on in his chosen way, helping here and there to unfold the larger self in men, until he finally accomplishes something that is beyond the power of ordinary men. He gathers up, as it were, a number who are ready to make the spiritual ascent to the heights of aspiration which he has attained and he leads them to the path which stretches, white and pure, to the Gate of Life Immortal.

Many who travel this path pass on through the Gate of Life Immortal and then return to help others to this goal. Many who receive the Spark from the great spiritual Fire return to carry It down into the hearts of men, and It burns and burns until It consumes their desires for the things of the lower world. This is the real plan of salvation. To become fit for the heaven of the Immortals, the home of Souls made perfect through the duties of everyday life, each grain of consciousness must respond to the Love of the Immortal and rise up out of the mire of the under-world. Each Self must grow and develop until the sensual creature of the lower circle is lifted up on the wings of its own aspirations to the godlike being of the upper circle. This is the destiny of all mankind and all must travel the path of discipleship.

The Disciple's mission is to help the spiritual growth of humanity, he is interested in this because it is the Master's work and he is a servant of the Master. Humanity as a whole is but a large family of children dependent upon the Great Father's care. The mental and spiritual growth of this family is of vast importance in God's plan, and the Masters, the elder brothers of humanity, are God's helpers. The Disciple helps the Masters to care for this family and he therefore becomes united with God's plan.

Within the heart of everyone lies a spark of divinity. With most of us It is so wrapped around with selfish desires that It is buried beyond our knowing. This Spark is the center from which comes all our fellow-love, for It is a Spark from the fire of Universal Love and It is in reality the "Christos," the Saviour of mankind. Often when we are bowed down with a great burden of care and sorrow this Spark, which is our Spiritual Self, is released from Its tomb of selfish desires and It becomes our one and only comforter. If we read the Twenty-third Psalm, realizing that this divine Spark is the "Lord" whom David ad-

dresses, we shall be surprised at the added beauty and simplicity given to these verses.

It is a saddening thought that we are a great deal more interested in material progress than in our spiritual welfare. We are so prone to try to apply every little breath of spiritual knowledge to the satisfaction of our selfish desires that the Masters guard carefully the knowledge of the great spiritual forces. Only those who have reached the point where the Spark is ready to burst into flame can be taught of many things which pertain to the Soul. The Flame should not be invoked in a spirit of selfish interest, lest it become a destroying fire, but when we are ready to turn our thoughts to the upper, the divine circle of life, then the Flame will, upon our prayer, consume all the selfish desires of our lower selves, purify our whole natures, and become our "Body of Immortality."

How many of us are ready for Discipleship?

F. A. Bruce.

THE BULB

THERE was a small bulb in the garden that engaged the attention of God.

"Grow!" said God.

And the bulb, with a leap of joy, shot shining green leaves like a crown. It rested there in the summer light and air,—content.

"Grow!" said the Lord to the bulb as it rested contentedly upon the summer warmth of the garden. (For He saw that its hour had come.)

The spirit of the bulb felt a pang of disturbance at the word of God; it was languid with the summer beauty and the pride of its own unfolding, the stage of greenness and growth that was so gracious. But it knew the Voice of God in the garden and moved upward. There were pangs, and it trembled; then began the miracle of bud and leaf and flower, of coronal and sweet perfume. The wonder accomplished itself; *there* rested the pride of the garden, beloved of all; of bee and butterfly, of child and man.

(But the wise old gardener, pausing, looked and said:

"'Tis a young bulb yet; aye, but a youngish bulb: there will be more to do, anon.")

Thereafter came autumn winds and rain, despoiling the flower:

"Grow!" said God.

But the storm was so loud that the spirit of the bulb heeded Him not. (Yet did the merciful Lord aid the bulb to accomplish its destiny.)

Mourning, and unaware of God, the life-spirit withdrew into the shining green leaves; autumn bit them; they died.

Mourning, the life-spirit withdrew into the stem, straight and strong, wind defying. The frost gnawed the stem; winter froze it; it withered away.

Mourning, the life-spirit of the bulb withdrew into the root, the bulb. There at the very center it sat, grieving, chilled and alone.

"Grow!" whispered God, very tender and low.

Then out spoke the flower-spirit, murmuring:

"How sayest Thou, Maker of me? Here sit I, cold, dark, alone, mocked at, trodden over by all manner of creeping, peering things. The under world witnesseth my despoiling and my shame. Dost Thou, too, make a mock, oh! King?"

It thundered in the garden as God said:

"GROW!"

And the bulb, sitting in darkness, felt a prayer contritely breathed from the spirit in its heart:

"How, then, Lord of the garden and of me, *shall* I grow?"

A soft cool quietness closed over the bulb. Oh! so dark. Oh! so still. Oh! so sweet, was it there. The small thing lay enfolded in the hand of God. And as it lay there willingly, forgetting its vanished glory, singing its little song of cheerful, patient contentment, the tenderest Voice whispered to the spirit of the bulb:

"There be many ways of growth. But the greatest is to lie quietly in the hand of God."

. . . . . .

Summer came again. The flower-spirit poured its life through stem and leaf into the white splendour of the lily, and all men and things hailed it the Queen of the garden, the flower whose garnered fragrance was dearest and best.

But the wise old gardener mused over it and said:

"Aye; the bulb that has stored up all this glory in the hard winter time, must have lain long under the hand of God."

. . . . . .

The world over, to-day, there are souls deeply mourning, because God has asked them to grow!

J. N.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

"TELL you about the angels," laughed the Student. "No; I cannot do that. But I can tell you what the Wanderer once told me. They played with him when he was a little child. He has always known them. He is so tremendously a man, and therefore so marvellously selfless: one result being that the angels are his friends.

"Angel, of course, means messenger; and in many cases when angels are mentioned in the Bible the term is applied, and is applied misleadingly, to disciples of high degree—to chelas, using the Eastern term. The two angels who visited Lot in the city of Sodom, and who turned into his house and 'did eat,' were chelas. So also were the angels who were seen by Mary Magdalene and others at the tomb of Jesus: 'two men' in 'shining garments,' as they are described by St. Luke.

"But these are perfected men, who have passed through the human kingdom. They have put on 'incorruption'—the greater among them, the 'Archangels,' probably during periods of evolution preceding our own. All the ancient races believed in the existence of such spiritual beings. The Babylonians called them *sukalli*. It is stated in the Talmud of Jerusalem, Rosch Haschanna, that the Jews adopted the names of the angels given them by the Babylonians. It was during the captivity that Daniel attained to vision. You will remember his experience: 'Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: his body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.'

"It was not of these that it was said by Paul the Apostle: 'Know ye not that we shall judge angels?' He was speaking of beings who have not as yet reached the human stage—of the Cherubim and Seraphim, so marvellously described by Dante, whose adoration is the adoration of God made manifest, but whose consciousness is not self-consciousness, and whose condition, therefore, though spiritual, is inferior to that which knows the difference between good and evil.

"It would be a mistake to confuse these lights of the spiritual world with the elementals of occult literature. The Gnomes and Undines and Sylphs and Salamanders have their place and purpose in the scheme of nature. They are centres of consciousness in the astral world, and to

a great extent are man-made—reflecting the thoughts and desires of unregenerate humanity. Earth and water and air and fire are symbols, in this connection, for corresponding sub-planes of the astral (psychic) intermediate sphere. The angels are elemental beings, not of the psychic but of the spiritual world, which is described by the author of *Light on the Path* as the 'higher astral.' They congregate in all centres of prayer. They surround with protective purity all those who, by their purity, attract them. They are the messengers and servants of all white Adepts. They are lovely to behold—radiant with light, breathing benediction, fragrant of heaven. 'Seraphim' means 'burning ones.' They are the embodiment of pure passion. They pour themselves into the channel of selfless, ardent prayer. They live in perpetual adoration, adoring not only that which is adorable, but adoration in and of itself. Have they wings? you ask. Again I tell you that I know nothing about it, and that I repeat to you only that which the Wanderer has told me. He says that it *looks* as if they had wings, owing to the ceaseless quiver of light and of colour which is part of their breathing, and to the stream of ethereal radiance which flows from their every movement. The conventional representation of them, as, for instance, by Fra Angelico, is as near the truth as can be, seeing that they are four-dimensional beings whose appearance, after three-dimensional form has been given them in the mind of the artist, has again to be transferred to surface expression on canvas. When I questioned the Wanderer about it, he referred me to a passage in the autobiography of Saint Teresa, in which, speaking of the celestial light and the difference between that and the light of the sun, she says that 'it is not a splendour which dazzles, but a sweet lustre. It is a brightness infused, which affords an exceeding great pleasure to the sight, and does not tire us.' Then she uses this illustration:

" 'It is as if we beheld very pure water running upon crystal, with the sun reflecting upon it and striking through it, in comparison with other very muddy water, seen on a cloudy day, and running upon an earthy bottom. Not that any sun is represented, nor is that light like the light of the sun; in a word, this light (of the spiritual world) seems a natural light, and the other (of the physical world) but an artificial one.'

"The truth is that all we can see of colour in this world is its reflection only: a piece of red paper, for instance, is not red in itself, but possesses the quality of absorbing certain rays of light, and of reflecting other rays, the result being an impression conveyed by our eyes to nerve centres in the brain, and from nerve centres to psychic centres—which, as result, we describe as 'red.' In the spiritual world, colour is seen directly; it is a living thing. In a sense, angels are colours. Yet they are much more. They are sound and they are fragrance. And they differ in appearance, in colour, in sound, and in function, more markedly even than the different races of men. The

force of Cherubim is static in comparison with the dynamic energy of the Seraphim. The colour-effect of the Cherubim is that of burnished silver, while that of the Seraphim—is different."

The Recorder interrupted: "Have you forgotten the colour?"

"No," answered the Student. "But the Wanderer asked me not to speak of certain things, and that was one of them. If you want to know why, ask him the next time you see him. I am not responsible. For the rest, he said that there are hierarchies of angels, everything and everybody in the real world being arranged in hierarchical order; and that the different play and quiver of force, as seen in different orders of angels, accounts for what appears as the upward or downward or forward stretch of their wings. The Cherubim, for instance, usually are seen as if their 'wings' were folded before them, the general impression being that they are bodiless—the head and face and wings of an angel, and no more. But this is not the case. The form, when seen truly, is complete.

"Are they going to become human? The Wanderer did not say. But I gathered that they belong to a kingdom different from ours; that they have their own path of evolution, and that, if ever they do become human, it will be only when humanity, in some far distant cycle of growth, shall have become purified and spiritualized beyond our present powers of understanding."

* * * * * * * *

A man prayed—prayed with anguish because of his many sins; prayed with desperate longing to live worthily because of his Master's forgiveness. "Take me and break me and make me." he said.

Then understanding came to him. He thought of a mother, praying by the side of her only child; of her brooding love and of her dreams of the child's dear future. Great was her love, great her hope; pure and lovely her vision of things to be. But the man knew that her love and hope and vision were nothing when compared with a Master's vision of one whom he watches and prays for; whom he guides through weary life-times, and whom he, as Master, sees for ever as the ideal self which sin and its darkness conceal.

The sense of it choked him. Praying still, it seemed to the man that his own heart would burst with the passion of love and of yearning which he felt in the heart of his Master; that he could not bear such patience with his corruption; such silent, uncomplaining tenderness; such faith in the splendour of being which he knew he ought to be, and between which and himself there hung nothing but the curtain of his own dark past. "Master," he cried, "for pity of all who love Thee, make Thy dream of me real!"

The Master stretched forth his arms. The silence quivered—though, in the room next to him, the man could hear the shouts of

drunken revellers. Three times he called the Master desperately by name,—while the angels in the Paradise which touched him, took up and echoed that name. Then there welled up in him these words: "Give me the minutes—and my joy!"

. . . . To give the Master his joy! Surely, yes; for could not a son give joy to his earthly father, and why not to the father of his soul? Then the man meditated on what had been said, and found wrapped round the words this further light: that the Master foresees each day—dreams each day—how we might live that day, from minute to minute, in act and thought and feeling; sees us ideally, sees us as we might and should be, sees us with hope and love, sees us with power; so that his thought of us makes an image and a mould which we, in each minute, should feel for, and, for love of him, should enter. Marvellous would be his joy if we were to do this thing: marvellous our own. And all we need to do is to remember—so that his dream may be real.

. . . . To all who believe in Masters, or in a Master, this way of growth is open. Desire opens it. A day of honest effort makes it visible. And it is a path that leads to heaven. May those who feel the desire realize that their wish is a reflection of what is.

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"I would give anything," remarked the Visitor, "to meet a real Adept, a great Occultist, and to be taught directly by him. Why are there no such people in the western world at the present time?"

"There are," cheerfully replied the Gael. "There are. You may have met and talked with them. They may have done their best to teach you directly: and you may have thought them common-place, even if polite. . . . Such things have been known. But you cannot expect to recognize an Adept for what he is, until you have learned to recognize the disciples of that Adept, and until you have learned from them how to recognize him.

"Let us imagine, however, that by some miraculous chance I were able this afternoon to take you to tea at the house of a great Occultist. What do you imagine would happen? Do you suppose that, over the cups and saucers, he would pour out information about the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, or that he would expound the esoteric meaning of the Upanishads? If so, you are mistaken. He would be gracious as host; he would behave as the finished man of the world, and would entertain you on a purely social basis, with conversation of a purely social kind. Probably you would go away terribly disappointed, and perhaps inclined to doubt whether so 'superficial' a person really could be an occultist. His own disciple, present in the room, would have learned a great deal: he would, as H. P. B. once phrased it, have 'watched the shadows on the wall': he would have watched every movement and gesture, would have listened to every word, would have sought

for that which the surface concealed and for the laws which his Teacher obeyed. Nothing would have seemed trivial—for nothing would have been trivial. He, as a disciple, would have known that the spiritual world can be revealed as clearly in the pouring of a cup of tea as in many learned discourses, and that it is not what is done, but the spirit in which the least thing is done that counts.

"The greater the treasure, the more carefully is it hidden and the greater the effort needed to unearth it. The fact that I talk so much about these things would prove, if proof were needed, how far I am from being an 'Adept': consequently, how uninteresting I must necessarily be to anyone like yourself, seeking as you do—very properly seeking—nothing less than the highest. Sacred things cannot correctly be spoken of except in the silence made by prayer. No Adept will speak unless in response to urgent demand, and to the demand of a man's whole nature. Further, there must be fitting time and place as well as an open heart. On the other hand, the fact that a man is an Adept makes it impossible for him to do less than give, no matter where he is or what he is doing. He embodies and acts the truth, in all circumstances. He is himself the revelation, and the least thing that he says or does is significant of all that he is. Consequently, an 'interview' would be useless until you had seen the wonder of his spirit—the amazing beauty of his soul—the perfection of his manhood—in the mere movement of his hands. . . . I am speaking, of course, of an Adept; and just as it is true that no man is a hero to his valet, for the excellent reason that a valet is a valet, so it needs a man who is a disciple to recognize the greatness akin to, but beyond, his own.

"People such as I am of course have to put up with the lesser light of the disciple. But it is doubtful whether we benefit as we might and as we should. In fact I have heard it said that the opportunities we waste are frightful to contemplate—treating as pleasant relaxation, or as lacking in seriousness, that which ought to serve us as matter for meditation and occult instruction. We proceed too often on the theory that a disciple is illuminating when he talks about discipleship, but is an ordinary mortal when he eats or drinks or when he talks about the weather: the fact being that his life, like that of an Adept, is a continuous whole, and that he expresses discipleship in every moment of time. . . . We might at least have sense enough to ask ourselves what he is saying to us 'on the inside,' while outwardly he is inquiring about plans for our summer vacation! We do not even do that. Yet, how can we expect to hear what Masters say to us—Masters whose eyes perhaps we cannot see—when we do not listen to that which their disciples say to us, whose eyes we can see and whose message of warning or of prompting may be heard with the help of sight and of feeling

and of contact. Believe me, they talk to us; and the words that they utter are the least of their 'conversation.'"

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"It would be helpful," began the Philosopher, on the next occasion of our meeting, "if someone would undertake to express occult training in terms of ordinary manliness. As I understand it, very few men, relatively speaking, have reached the human kingdom. They have attained to consciousness, but not to personal consciousness; and it is the aim of Masters to bring humanity to the state of being persons. To be a person is to have consciousness as the soul. . . . But that is not my immediate point, which is, that the ideal presented by the average devotional book appears, on the one hand, insipid, while, on the other hand, it lays too much emphasis on suffering and self-sacrifice, without saying one word about the outcome, which is virility. People get the idea that Occultism means giving up manhood, and that to lead the religious life implies a patient and docile acceptance of all that is disagreeable. This is an entire mistake. Everything that the Masters are working for tends to develop a race of more splendidly virile men and more divinely womanly women. In its essence, of course, religion must epitomize *all* the qualities; but until that is understood we should learn clearly to perceive their purposes in the commonest ideals."

"You have touched on a point there that has often interested me," said the Student. "A man is a man, and religion most decidedly should develop that essential quality in him. Christ was of all things a man of tremendous force and power, and yet I have heard many people speak of him as effeminate. Buddha was a warrior Prince. Surely, just as real manliness was one of their attributes, they must expect it of us. We all admire courage, and couple it with the fighting quality. To be living a well-rounded life one must have these in addition to self-control and patience; and an ideal of manhood is impossible without them."

"Courage can be expressed in many ways, and more frequently by perseverance in some task already undertaken than most people are willing to admit," commented the Philosopher. "The fighting quality also is too often identified with mere physical violence. Remember how Joshua took Jericho from the Amorites and Canaanites by the terrible weight of accumulated silence. A trying, nerve-racking siege takes quite as much sheer courage to carry to a successful conclusion, as the storming of a breach. In fact, I think it takes rather more. We all know that the veteran soldier is the one who can stay perfectly quiet when under fire, while the recruit longs for action. The Masters in their ideal for mankind must expect us eventually to acquire all kinds of courage, and the courage of endurance is surely one of the highest. Even in that connection, however, we are apt to think of the means rather than of the result; of the discipline rather than of the strength

which rewards us. When men train for a race, they do not consider a restricted diet, regular hours, and the actual muscular fatigue, as heroic self-sacrifice. They think of the race to be run, and of winning that race. Why should people think of discipleship so negatively—as the surrender, practically, of everything pleasant in life! Their approach to the whole subject is lop-sided. Surely, to become more manly or more womanly is what each one of us wants."

"Yes," replied the Student; "but what is manliness? We have spoken of courage as typically a quality of manhood. What are the other qualities which go to make up a well-rounded ideal?"

The Sage arrived at this point, and was asked at once for his contribution.

"Too big a subject for off-hand definition," he said. "However, if you ask me personally for my ideal, I should like, for one thing, to be able to meet and to deal effectually with any and every situation that might arise. A man should be master of circumstances—never dependent upon them. Further, as I see it, we should not limit our ideal, under this head, to situations of daily occurrence. We should look forward to tests of real and great difficulty. Daily events, to the smallest, should be regarded as opportunities for practice, enabling us to free our minds from personal bias and from passion; enabling us to see things as they are and also as others see them. Until I can place myself inside the brain and heart of another man and see things as he sees them, I shall fall short of my ideal. I must be able to do this in order to help him. And there are different ways of helping him. Suppose that fate were to place me in opposition to others—in business, in war, or in any other branch of the Masters' service. What is the secret of successful generalship if not the ability to foresee the moves of your enemy? Your whole argument, as I understand it, is that occultism is not peculiar or unpractical, but that the demands it makes are those which need to be obeyed by anyone who aspires to first-class performance in any walk in life. Either war or its modern equivalent, business, illustrates the truth of what you say. Imagine the result if the commander of an army were to think only of his own position and mode of advance, and were to fail to take into account the number, position and probable strategy of the enemy! Battles have been won before now by calculating correctly the effect of too good a dinner upon a general whose weakness was gluttony. St. Michael won a victory for the French under Joan of Arc by starting a stag across the track of the English, who revealed their position by loud view-halloos. In essence, that kind of foresight is the same as the ability to put ourselves in the place of another—something we shall never be able to do until we learn to see ourselves as we are, with good and bad and with latent possibilities all recognized impartially."

"You are bringing things down to a very low level," said the Ob-

jector. "What business had St. Michael, supposing there was such a person, to use his wisdom on behalf of the French and against the English? Would you take that as an instance of occult practice?"

"Why not? You must admit the possibility (I should say the certainty) that he was not acting 'against' the English, but quite as much for them as for the French. As I see it, nothing but moral disaster could have resulted to the English if they had been permitted to remain in possession of France. They, of course, saw their defeat as a disaster. That was natural. Human nature, unregenerate and blind, always sees defeat of its own self-will as 'hard luck,' or as the work of evil spirits, or as God's lack of attention to His duty. In the nature of things those who see spiritually see further. St. Michael, if we recognize him as an agent of Masters, could not have helped the French against the English unless it had been for the ultimate advantage and happiness of both nations. But this law should be observed in business as much as in occultism. There can be no greater folly commercially than for one man to sell to another something which the latter will not be able to use to his own profit. A good salesman should sell for the benefit of the buyer. If he is not able to do this conscientiously, it will be more profitable in the end to wait until he can offer an article which he knows will give satisfaction. It does not matter whether he is handling bonds or gas-engines or potatoes. Suppose he represents a bank, and that he approaches a man who has money to invest. Suppose that by means of lying and persuasion he sells to the investor some bonds on which interest is not paid. The investor will not buy again from that bank. Further, he will do what he can to discredit it. If, on the other hand, the salesman really believes in the value of the bond he is selling, and is content with a fair profit, he benefits his customer by selling it to him; and is justified in using all his ability to present the truth as he sees it in such a way as to overcome preliminary objections. It is folly to call business dishonest. Often it is conducted dishonestly. But that is true of the professions. It is true of every activity of men. In itself, business is the means of supplying others with such things as they need for their physical well-being and which they can obtain most easily and profitably with your assistance.

"If that be understood, it follows that an occultist could conduct a business successfully while obeying in all respects the fundamental principles of occultism. More: it follows that it is only by obedience to occult principles that business can be made successful permanently. Consequently, every business man needs occult training—needs, in other words, to become a man in the highest and most complete sense of the word. Success which is obtained is due to the development of some one or more of the manly qualities; and the greatest of modern business men (those who tower above the rank and file) in every case possess charac-

teristics and faculties which are superb,—or which would be, if the motive directing them were as highly developed as the faculties exercised.

"Your effort is, as I understand it, to reduce occult training to terms of manliness,—or of womanliness, as the case may be. Think, then, how essential self-control is to success in war or in business, as in occultism. And I mean more than control of the body and nerves: I mean control of the mind, so that facts and things and persons and situations can be studied with unimpassioned and impersonal deliberation, or so that the intuition can act without the distortion which the undisciplined mind invariably gives to it. Then surely we must include in our ideal of manliness—in our desire for ourselves—a fiery, indomitable, but perfectly controlled energy. Of what use would be understanding without the force to give effect to it! Cool judgment and quick intuition must be backed by lightning rapidity of action, or, when there is need, by steady, persistent, sledge-hammer drive. And perhaps, under the head of force, we should include fearlessness—the kind of fearlessnessness that will face ruin rather than do a mean thing, and that will refuse business in direst need rather than swerve from principle. A king who will risk his kingdom rather than plunge his people into a war worked up by demagogues, shows the same kind of courage. He is a man, and he remains a man, whether he lose his kingdom or not: and all the gods in heaven love him.

"Yet, under this head of force, we must not forget that a man of real force invariably is gentle. Bluster is the opposite of force. There must be no sputter of irritation to mar the quality of his strength.

"Next, we must include in our ideal a serene and cheerful heart. If it be our fate to go into battle, let us hope we may do so with that sort of radiant gladness which inspires the weak and steadies the headstrong. Though making light of nothing, we must bring lightheartedness to the most serious of tasks.

"Above all things we must be men, and must never forget the dignity of our manhood. There is a true pride as well as a false; and dignity is the child of self-respect. For this reason we owe it to ourselves to be courteous in manner and in speech, and it would be a poor ideal indeed which did not include the utmost polish of both. Who would not wish, also, that his movements, instead of being noisy and gawkish, might be rhythmical and harmonious,—agreeable to others instead of distressing. For this, quietness of heart and of nerve is necessary. So quietness of heart and of nerve we must have!

"Then there is something called charm. Its more exact definition escapes me. I think it is made up of humility and kindliness. Is there a man anywhere who would not wish to possess it? And yet, if it be lacking, how can it be obtained except by self-abnegation, by stern suppression of self-assertiveness, and by the cultivation of sympathy and gentleness?

"Unselfishness there must be, if a man truly is to be a man. What can be less manly than self-love, self-broodings, self-preoccupation! And a man should be generous in unselfishness. Is it not Faber who speaks of 'the grace of kind listening' as well as of kind speaking? Generosity is not limited to the giving of things. Nothing less than the gift of oneself should really be counted as generous.

And a man must be uncomplaining of his fate. The grumbler, the creature who whines, is not a man. More than that, to be truly man, he must accept his fate gladly, positively—determined to use it, not to be used by it; to ride on and by means of crest and hollow, success and failure, joy and sorrow, always to victory. One of the differences between a weak man and a strong, is that the former when knocked down, feels himself worsted, while the strong man thinks only of the advantage to be gained from his position and of his next move forward.

"Finally, what man, to be a man, can be less than loyal and faithful? There are men who boast of their infidelities; but they have not reached the human kingdom. They are the brothers of apes. . . . I said 'finally,' but I have hardly scratched the surface of so vast a subject. An ideal of manhood! Could we omit absolute cleanliness of mind as of person; a conscience sensitive to the least departure from honour, from uprightness, from duty? For how else can a man be relied on for his sense of responsibility, and what less manly than a man who has none? To live as though he had a mission from God, though it were only the proper cleaning of windows or the drilling of troops or the manufacture of chairs and tables—that would be to live as a man should live; and perhaps most of it is summed up in that way. . . . You protest? Well,—I am taking it for granted that a man with a mission from God would need to be god-like: and the gods are never revolutionary.

"How about women?" asked the Objector. "Would you suggest that a woman, to be a saint, needs only to be more thoroughly a woman?"

"Needs to be more ideally womanly, would express it better," replied the Sage. "But this is dangerous ground. Perhaps the Philosopher will enlighten us."

The Philosopher turned to the Recorder: "To be continued in our next," he said, and left the room.

T.

ELEMENTARY PAPER

Are Theosophists Practical?

"WHAT are you Theosophists doing for the world? We should have an awful city if we all lived as you do." These are the words of a woman who was very much in earnest, and I must confess that they shocked me. This is not all that she said, for I had to confess when pressed that I did not know of any Theosophist who was taking an active part in the philanthropic and reform societies of the city except myself. Here again she made me admit that I did not represent the Theosophists but a Christian Church. I pleaded that we were few in number and had our own work to do, and were trying to do good in other ways; that we were interested in all these problems, and that our central belief was Universal human brotherhood. With something of scorn she wanted to know what it could profit the world for us to devote all our time to the study of these theories, and even intimated that we were living selfish lives. "Here are Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Anglicans, Congregationalists, Catholics, Unitarians, Jews and others, all trying to relieve the poverty and misery of the city, all working together in harmony, why don't the Theosophists join in?"

Now this may be an unjust judgment as I protested that it was, but it will do us no harm to face these questions. I was attending a meeting in the Convocation Hall of the University, a meeting which was intended to give information and to awaken a greater interest in the care and treatment of the feeble-minded by the city and by the Government. The meeting was representative of all classes of citizens, including the Mayor and Aldermen of the city, Government officials, lawyers, judges, ministers of religion of all denominations, teachers, merchants, artisans and others—all of whom seemed to be deeply interested in the welfare of these defective classes. All through the meeting this woman's words remained with me; and I was led to ask myself in all seriousness whether we were really spending our time in studying Karma, Reincarnation, and Universal Brotherhood without doing anything to apply this knowledge in everyday life to help our fellows: whether we are devoting time and energy to our own psychical and spiritual development and giving no time to the rescue and guidance of our brothers and sisters in bonds. If so, is not this simply another form of selfishness?

As I looked over the charts presented by one of the speakers showing the family history of a number of boys and girls in our State Institution, I was greatly impressed with the opportunity and the responsibility of the Community for these unfortunate ones. Of course it would have been easy to criticise the lecturer, easy to say, "Yes, there is some truth in what you say, but your theory of heredity is very defective and Theosophy would help you to a better and more complete knowledge of how a man is indebted to his parents, and to his general ancestry for his physical, psychic, and moral qualities." But the thought came back to me, "What are we, with our superior knowledge, doing to instruct the public to solve these difficult problems of practical life?

If the lecturer had been familiar with the teaching of the *Secret Doctrine* he would not have said some things he did say, nor would he have left without a word of explanation the fact that in some of these families there was only one defective child, while there were four or more normal children with the same parentage and environment. He would have learned from the *Secret Doctrine* that there are three distinct streams of heredity flowing into man. The physical heredity he could plainly see and prove by his own methods, but the mental heredity, while as plainly seen, is not susceptible of proof by the same methods. Yet by another kind of evidence it can be shown that the assimilated results of personal conscious experiences are carried forward by the Ego, or personal experiencer; and this is mental heredity. Each soul brings over from its own past the good and bad qualities it has gathered through experience in past lives, but these qualities are more or less modified by the race and family in which it incarnates. In one life he may be a Caucasian, and in another a Negro, or an Indian; the dark or light complexion and features of one life being changed or modified by the new blood introduced by reëmbodiment in another race.

The scientists have modified somewhat their ideas of heredity during recent years. They no longer believe that diseases are transmitted from parents to offspring (except in special cases), but it is generally agreed, following the curious and partially correct theory of Professor Weissmann, that the taint of weakness is stamped upon certain cells giving them a tendency to yield to certain diseases, or the inability to withstand the attack of these diseases. In some families there seems to be a tendency to cancer, consumption, typhoid or other diseases, and in one family an attack of one of these diseases is nearly always fatal, while in another the attack is generally of a mild character. In like manner we find in one family a tendency to manifest certain passions, appetites, and desires, or to commit certain crimes or vices, and these tendencies are transmitted from parent to child through several generations. So also certain deficiencies of brain and nervous centers are apparently transmitted in the same way. Yet, according to Theosophical teaching, while there seems to be a yielding to the thought of the parents in reproducing

these undesirable physical peculiarities and mental traits, the real fact is that these tendencies are brought over from a past life and the parents only give the vehicle for their physical expression, or else the same parents would not have both good and bad children. The Theosophical theory alone can account for the differences in character between children of the same parents.

The most important stream of heredity is that which the soul inherits from its own past. Racial, national, and family heredity are but the karmic relations between us and our past. We are reaping exactly what we have sown, and have come back to earth with that character, whether lovely or unlovely, that we have ourselves created. If a child is born with a tendency to a disease which cripples its mentality or leads it to insanity or imbecility, that is not the result of fate, or chance, or the accident of birth. Under the law of cause and effect the soul returns with its powers crippled or expanded by its own actions alone. We Theosophists have got all this clearly fixed in our minds; but surely we do not think that these brothers should be left in their darkness to struggle unhelped. The fact that when left alone they become a scourge to society is proof sufficient that it is our duty to care for them. The neglect of one family (as the Jukes family in New York State) has often cost a state tens of thousands of dollars and many lives. While these feeble-minded ones are *unmoral*—they have no moral judgment—their influence is often fearfully immoral. For example take a common case of a sexual pervert in a public school, and scores of children are made morally unclean in a short time.

What can we do? Under favorable conditions and with the help of stronger souls the Ego may win in this struggle with its physical vehicle and succeed in stamping its own characteristics on the body. If it is not possible to liberate these unfortunates in this incarnation, perhaps we may so help them that they may be free in the next. In this department alone there is great opportunity for all compassionate souls. Three per cent. of all the pupils in the public schools of the United States and Canada are feeble-minded, and taking the whole population there is an even greater proportion of defectives. I believe three per cent. is a low estimate for our schools, as the few that I have been able personally to investigate have a higher percentage than that given above. During the last twenty-five years considerable progress has been made in classification, care and treatment of defectives, and the new methods now adopted for the separate training of backward pupils will give an opportunity to thousands who to-day are not cared for. About ninety per cent. of such children can, by special care and training, be made self-supporting, but not self-controlling. Very few of them can be lifted to the plane of self-direction, but they can be taught habits of cleanliness, and under the care and guidance of others can be taught to earn their own living.

In addition to these defectives there are thousands of other children, naturally bright, but living in such depraved surroundings that they almost necessarily drift into vice and crime. They are found in all our cities, living in crowded tenements and slums in which drinking is common, poverty universal and the virtues of honesty and truth-telling rare. Where the children play, men and women are working, swearing, fighting, and drinking, or sleeping off the effects of past horrible indulgences, or else making preparation for some new break. In these places children generally swarm in astonishing numbers, but what future can we expect for children who are brought up in such conditions? Of course there is a great deal of sickness and suffering here and we are not surprised if those who seek to relieve these conditions lose patience with the indifference of good people to the work they are trying to do. In all except our very largest cities these conditions are changing rapidly for the better. Our City Health department is condemning over-crowding; our Playground Associations, Children's Aid Societies and compulsory education laws are destroying these unhealthy conditions and giving these hitherto unfortunate ones a chance to breathe pure air and also to come into contact with a purer moral atmosphere, giving them a vision of nobler ideals.

The Theosophist should seek to come into sympathy with all that lives, and this divine sympathy will be an inspiration to unselfish service. When the sense of human brotherhood takes full possession of us we shall be anxious to serve all mankind. We shall no longer be influenced by desire for pleasure, nor by fear of pain, for we shall have come under a new law—the law of sacrifice. The law of sacrifice is the law of life-evolution, and this is the lesson the Wise Ones are trying to teach us. Gradually we have been taught by our religious teachers to sacrifice the lower for the higher, to conquer the body for the sake of the mind, to regulate its activities by directing them into useful channels. Obedience, reverence, charity, and kindness to all have been demanded, and slowly men have been helped to evolve heroism and self-sacrifice until they have joyfully given up life itself for the sake of others. When we come still higher and cease to ask what reward we shall receive for what we do, and associate ourselves with the law of sacrifice as the law of life, and give ourselves in joyful surrender to be channels of love to the world, we shall understand what is meant by the joy of sacrifice and by a life of bliss. For all of us there are opportunities of service, and in no way can progress be made so rapidly and the latent powers of the monad be so quickly awakened as by the understanding and practice of the law of sacrifice. We are told that a Master called it, "The law of evolution for man." Therefore the Theosophist should be first and foremost in all works of practical charity and helpfulness, and in this work should use the knowledge and the discrimination which come from his study of the Great Law.

JOHN SCHOFIELD.

REVIEWS

Speculum Animæ, by W. R. Inge. Some of us have grown accustomed to hear clergymen declare that Christ's message has not yet been apprehended. When we hear such a statement we feel confident that a sermon on socialism is to follow. But when the statement comes from the devout writer of the Bampton lectures on *Christian Mysticism* it stirs hope. "We cannot suppose," says Dr. Inge, in one of four addresses delivered at Cambridge (England), "that the forms which Christianity has so far assumed—Jewish Christian Messianism, the paganised Christianity of Western Catholicism, the fossilised Christianity of the East, the disrupted and fissiparous Christianity of the North—are any better than caricatures of what Christ meant His Church to be." What does Dr. Inge suggest that will bring Christianity, as we have long known it, nearer to the Source of all religion, the Wisdom Religion, from which it has almost cut itself off, trickling away in desert sand?

Happily, he is uncompromising toward all modern psychic shams that minister to sleek well-being: "It is the blasphemy of Christian Science and kindred movements to deny the Cross. And in our soft, self-indulgent age, it is shamefully felt to be a greater difficulty in the way of belief in God that men should suffer than that men should sin. This timid, pain-dreading temper is thoroughly unchristian." His suggestions and recommendations are very simple. He tells his hearers to end their considerations *about* religion and to get into religion. He recommends habits like those of the old Carthusian, Brother Lawrence—exercise in prayer—inward prayer, not oral—"in every place, but not openly to be seen of men; in walks for recreation, in intercourse with others, in silence, in reading, in all rational pursuits." These words from Dr. Inge sound singularly like others that I have heard repeated, and that come from the ancient and distant East. Such practice, I have heard said by those who are familiar with the Vedanta philosophy, constitutes chelaship. Dr. Inge declares that such Practice of the Presence of God raises one to the sphere of true realities, into the unseen real world.

Dr. Inge has certainly found some method of life for himself quite different from what is known as "orthodox Christianity," for he takes for granted in man a principle which does not and cannot consent to sin and which is the point of contact with the Divine. All else than this divine principle in man he calls "the false self," and he writes this striking sentence that brings back golden words of the *Gita:* "The worst shadows that hide the sun from us are those which we make ourselves by standing in our own light, by putting the swollen and lumpish image of the false self between the hidden man of the heart and his God." He seems further to think that Christianity, essentially, is a "way" (as it was called by the early disciples) of bringing the lower false self into subjection to the higher true self; for he quotes that old saying of Athanasius: "Christ became man that we might become Gods."

I rub my eyes as I read such words. "Which is Theosophy," I ask myself, "Christianity or my doxy?" Is it possible that Molière's joke on the good-natured

bourgeois Mons. Jourdain, is lurking somewhere around. Has Christianity been talking Theosophy all its life and we have not known it? I indignantly repudiate the thought. And I take down a volume on *Christian Dogmatics* published in 1866 "in the good old days." This is the real stuff. This is orthodox Christianity, quite denuded of the purple patches, borrowed from Egypt and India, to hide its foulness. Here are the three Lord Shaftsburies and all the other machinery of their petty universe. I open at total depravity and original sin: "Although man, in virtue of his actual will, may fall from God, according to his *essential* will, in the innermost kernel of his freedom, he is indissolubly united to the divine λόγος." That is not satisfactory. I do not like "innermost kernel of his freedom" and "indissolubly united to the divine λόγος;" it sounds like the *Secret Doctrine*. Let's try Baptism. "Baptism is not only the ground-work of a new consciousness, but of a new life, not only of a new faith, but of a new man, who is more than the self-conscious man. The hidden point of life is the mystery of baptism." That is not satisfactory either. It sounds esoteric. Let's try Transubstantiation. "The Eucharist is not only an aliment for the soul but an aliment for the whole new-man who is germinating and growing in secret." That is more esoteric. *"Par ma foi, il y a plus de quarante ans que je dis de la prose, sans que j'en susse rien."*

ALFRED WILLISTON.

The Coming Order, by Lucy Re-Bartlett. This is a book which should be read by the anti-suffragist to clear her thinking and by the suffragist to test her point of view. For it is written from the standpoint of both, by a woman who shares with them a profound belief that only as Woman (with a capital W) solves the problem of her own higher development will the race be saved.

It consists of twelve essays with an allegorical preface. Two—"Woman" and the "Position of Women" were written for Italians in the *Rassequa Contemporanea* and the *Vita Femminile Italiana,* and one "Sincerity in Social Life" for the modern Englishman in the *Contemporary Review* of April, 1911. Whether the others have appeared before is not indicated. They are written with much clearness and conviction by a woman who is a practical worker in philanthropic fields and whose heart and soul is evidently set on finding a solution of the hideous problem which seems eternally to bar human progress.

Signora Re-Bartlett's subject is the relations of men and women and she takes it at once on to very high ground. She believes that the development of woman depends upon her development of a power peculiar to her which she calls her intuition. This power is latent in all women but is to be roused to consciousness by her rigid adherence to her highest ideals, by her purity, her self-forgetfulness.

"It is when woman forgets herself—loses all sense of her womanhood and its possible limitations in an ideal which brooks no obstacle—it is then that she is most essentially a woman, and most womanly. For she is lifted above her bodily nature with all its weaknesses and becomes a purely spiritual force—an inspiration. And this is her destiny, and in its fulfilment she attains her power. . . . For such women do not represent competition, nor conflict with men. They have educated their intellects certainly, but in points of detail they recognize a wider grasp and a longer experience in men, and they are content on such points to be silent. They speak only to bring their note of insight and intuition regarding some great under-current which the male intellect has insufficiently perceived, and when they so speak they are listened to. . . . "It is an error to believe that it is the man who has impeded or who impedes woman's progress—in the deepest sense it is always the woman herself. She has not developed sufficiently the power which gives her royal progress whenever she uses it—the

power of inspiration." And again—"Christ said to His disciples 'be ye perfect.' The great Master did not hesitate to impose the idea of perfection because He doubtless knew the immediate attainment to be impossible." This is the note which women today have got to catch. They have got to do away with low standards and low demands—they have got to demand for society, purity. And together with an infinite patience for incomplete attainments, must go a ruthless demand for *complete endeavour*. "It is the spirit of aspiration, and faith and struggle which makes any society sound—its absence which makes it corrupt. Low standards are infinitely more perilous than low attainment. With women lies the duty of fixing social standards where they should be."

. . . . . .

"But it behooves woman if she would serve her world today to . . . learn to preach with her whole self, not only with her intuition. With the development of her intellect she must improve her power of utterance, and with her life she must justify it." The power which woman must oppose to the Evil which figures as the Beast in the allegorical preface, is her purity, which, of course, is the condition of her intuitional power. But it is best to again let Signora Re-Bartlett speak for herself. . . . "And it is in the light of this general definition of purity that we would ask woman to comprehend her relation to man. She has got to stand with the things which liberate him—never with the things which bind him. She has got to give him *him*self rather than *her*self. And for the accomplishment of her most difficult task she has got to realise that this gift of his own spirit is a far higher gift—only so will she have strength to achieve.

"For woman's weakness lies in her heart—her impulse to give it so strong that she can only control it if she substitute for one giving a higher giving. The Spartan mothers knew something of this—the wives and mothers of today have got to relearn the lesson in wider form. They too have got to make their sacrific to the 'State,' but it is a 'state spiritual' and its establishment will bring a greater gain to the men who share in it than any earthly state of old could bestow."

These sentences from the first essay on "Woman" indicate Signora Re-Bartlett's point of view—one which makes a demand very different and far beyond that of most advanced modern women. In the essays that follow she fearlessly pursues her subject to its roots.

She scores the woman who accepts things as they are. She pleads for clear thinking, for the preservation of a high ideal, for the belief in and practice of absolute purity. She defines purity—in the relations of young girls with men, in the relations of men and women of the world, of wives and husbands, and parents and children.

In her chapters on "Maternity" and "Marriage" she shows how false and slovenly are the current ideas on these great subjects, how often they ignore the mental and spiritual sides of our threefold nature and are based on a purely physical interpretation of human needs.

She writes with much sureness of touch, often with a tone of authority. She sees the evil, she explains the causes, she suggests the cure. It is in her perception and description of what is wrong that the value of the book lies.

She points out the confusion in most people's minds between sensuality and passion, and shows that while the one is the force that beyond any other degrades humanity "passion in its nobler forms is, at this stage of evolution, the force that best can elevate it." She shows "that passion in its essence is simply intensity and those who are afraid to be intense never do great things."

In the chapter on "Passion as a Spiritual Force," she has really found the

solution—but from her habit of mind as a working philanthropist she swings back, in her later chapters, to the search for practical remedies; for recipes to hand out to her aspiring sisters in their eager (and complacent?) desire to fill the rôle which she offers them of saviours of the race.

For in spite of the high demands which this little book makes of human nature, one closes it with the disappointed sense, that almost in spite of herself, and of a knowledge of spiritual law which she undoubtedly possesses and applies, Signora Re-Bartlett has made her appeal to Woman as Woman, and not to Truth itself.

Of her own method of finding truth she gives us a hint in an article signed by herself, called "Divine Promptings" in the *Hibbert Journal* for April 1912; and reading it one finds oneself asking what are the implications of the guidance she has discovered to be so blessed and so illuminating a fact? To listen—quietly—to a "prompting" which may reach you at any unprepared moment, to obey quickly, fearlessly, in spite of any consequences of fatigue or pain; to learn by such "listening" and such obedience to be very sure of the "Voice," very sure of the Path along which it leads you, this surely is very different from arranging set programmes by which Woman, possessed in virtue of her womanhood of her secret power, may, by the faithful exercise of it, raise fallen man to his divine self!

Signora Re-Bartlett does not contend that this high power inheres in woman herself; she is simply—when she has emptied herself of her lower nature—its channel. She is the means to the great end of raising men who can only be raised by and through her. Surely this offers her a great rôle—one which should be very sympathetic to the modern woman whose aspirations are a mixture of passionate assertion of her human "rights" and passionate pity for the wrongs of both her working and fallen sisters.

To change these aspirations from their purely personal standpoint—to show women that to save others is a nobler ambition than to save themselves is, perhaps, a step in the right direction and lifts the "Woman Question" from its acute personal stage one plane higher, but does it get the whole subject any nearer the truth? The popular teaching of the day is that we are all "Channels;" so near the divine that we have only to sit still and realise our divinity to make actual all sorts of physical, mental and spiritual potentialities. And the Signora's helpful and suggestive little book savours just a little of this modern fallacy. Woman! —to be sure she must first save herself—but having done that *she* is to be the means of salvation to the rest of the world; and all the time not unconscious of her mission, of the power and prestige of it! But do not the facts point the other way? Have we ever been saved by a programme? Is there any solution to the rotting sores of society other than the solution which each human soul must find for his own sores? Any solution other than the one the Signora has found for herself? She does not hint at the source of the promptings beyond the use of the word "divine." She does not speak of discipleship, but she lays much stress on obedience—and what she describes are the first stages of the Way to the Gates of Gold. By these Gates alone can woman enter to her freedom.

J. B. P.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION 138.—*What is the meaning of the words in Matthew xi, 11, "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he"?*

ANSWER.—There is a legal maxim which says, "The least of that which is greatest is greater than the greatest of that which is least." Jesus eulogises John as a great prophet but intimates that he belonged to a lower dispensation that was about to pass away. John stood for law, judgment, vengeance; he preached repentance, not regeneration—flee from the wrath to come, cut out self-indulgence. His ideals were secular not spiritual:—the ax was his symbol, and he thought of Christ as a destroyer not as a Savior. He would have been disappointed with the sermon Jesus preached at Nazareth when he said, "He hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captive, the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised," for of mercy and compassion John seems to have had little conception. So that while he was great as a reformer and a destroyer he that was least in the new kingdom of the spirit, was greater than he.

J. S.

ANSWER.—John the Baptist was a "yogi"—a great and wonderful and splendid man, but not "twice-born" in the technical occult sense. He had not been "born from above." He was a Messenger; but he had not attained that degree of initiation which gives permanent life in the Kingdom of Heaven. He had vision; but he had not gained full consciousness of himself as an Immortal.

E. T. H.

QUESTION 139.—*Is there such a thing as scorn on the Spiritual Plane? For instance, when Christ drove the money changers from the Temple in that high-handed way, was he acting spiritually?*

ANSWER.—Was not the Master acting a parable? Is not this shown by the fact that "money-changers in the temple" is now as much a proverb as the good Samaritan?

C. J.

ANSWER.—Is not Unity the essence of life on the spiritual plane? Can unity scorn any part of itself, find any smallest section of the great whole worthy of scorn? The sense of separateness is essential to the very notion of scorn. Our Protestant habit of finding justification for every desire in some passage from the Bible leads us into many surface absurdities that would be impossible but for that heedless habit. No one could imagine that a great general would lead a batallion of his army into an engagement that would result only in giving him the personal satisfaction of driving the enemy for once out of a position that he was sure to re-occupy immediately. Yet we can seriously consider whether a Master of Life might give way to a resentment that was personal in its expression and was, in this interpretation, directed against people who merely followed a custom of the times, and would continue the next day to do the same thing, in the same way.

Surely conservation of force must apply to the spiritual planes, making further impossible such action as that suggested. A. C. B.

ANSWER.—There is no answer to this question except—Find out! It is useless to deliver *ex cathedra* opinions. Argument and reason do not apply. Only experience of spiritual things can give understanding of what is and of what is not spiritual. Live the life and you will know the doctrine. Obey a Master's commandments and you will understand him. Incidentally you will discover that while spirituality makes scorn of persons impossible, scorn of wrong-doing and of evil is not incompatible. X. Y. Z.

QUESTION 140.—*I am a mother with several small children and a household to look after. My life is full of distractions and I am so tired by the end of the day that I find it almost impossible to study and very difficult to meditate or to pray. Yet I should dearly love to draw nearer to Masters and to give myself to their work so far as my duties allow. The trouble is that I have nothing to give except worn-out nerves and an exhausted mind,—although at the best of times I have no mind worth talking about. What can I do?*

ANSWER.—There is no reason why you should not, because of the very things which you regard as obstacles, become as great as any of the saints. The obstacles exist in your mind, not in fact. Actually they are your opportunities. In the first place, that you have no mind, or think you have none is an immense advantage. Most people imagine that they have minds, and convert themselves into a stew of messy mental processes, the result of which is to shut them off from the light which stillness would enable them to receive. The mind is an idiot, and remains an idiot until it has become the obedient servant of the soul. Secondly, duties are the equivalent of prayers, if they are performed in the spirit of prayer: if each act be offered up on the altar of the heart; if the result of all acts be sacrificed to Masters; if we do all that we have to do as in the presence of Masters. If your duties occupy so much of your time that none is left for prayer and meditation, the probability is that earlier to bed and earlier to rise would give you half an hour in the morning which you could use for this purpose. But if every earnest effort to gain a half hour for that purpose should prove futile, accept your deprivation as proof that your path for the present lies in the dedication of all acts to God—or to the Higher Self, or to the Master, whichever may seem nearest and easiest for you. As it is, you find your duties exhausting. This shows in itself that you do not perform them with Recollection; for from Recollection springs Detachment, and that means eternal peace. Recollection must be acquired; and this can be done by selecting certain hours during the day—later, each hour and half hour—for particular recollection in the midst of what you are doing. An ejaculation of prayer—a few words in your heart—words that express your hope and purpose—will serve as piers which, brought closer and closer, finally become continuous as meditation and, therefore, continuous as inner communion. Your outer life will then be no more—and no less—than the expression of your spiritual existence. You will live and move and have your being with Masters, no matter where you are or what you are doing. And this, not as the result of intellectual processes, but because you will give yourself as you are, without reserve or qualification—will give your fatigue and your impatience and your limitations, simply and with faith, trusting, not in your own ability to achieve, but in the ability of Masters to convert nothing into something, and to raise the lowest and the least to divine at-one-ment. E. T. H.

QUESTION 141.—*Some people speak as though self-assertion were wrong. How would it be possible to overcome evil practices or evil opinions, without insisting on better ones? Have not great men always asserted themselves?*

ANSWER.—In the introduction to *The Song of Life* are given three tasks of the awakened soul. One of these is to second the will of the radiance in others even against their lower selves, and we are told that in so doing we shall draw forth wonder and willing help. This is the direct antithesis of self-assertion, and a little experience of life will show that it is true. By putting ourselves in sympathetic understanding with others we gain their cordial response and coöperation. Imaginative sympathy is a term which has been happily applied to this attitude of mind. It is akin to the teaching of Emerson: Trust men and they will be true to you. Treat them greatly and they will show themselves great.

I once attended a course of lectures on the history of philosophy. The lecturer began at the very dawn of historic Greek thought. Each philosopher that he presented to us, we, the listeners, in turn, thought was his intellectual master, the main points of each system were so sympathetically and forcibly brought out. Finally he said: "The pre-requisite of all criticism is a sympathetic understanding of what your man is driving at." Then we saw why the mustiest of antiquated systems had become vital and suggestive in his hands. They had yielded their secrets to the touch of imaginative sympathy.

But if love begets love, sympathy sympathy, it is equally true that self-assertion and opposition beget self-assertion and opposition. The seeds are in the hands of the sower, and according as he sows will be the crop which is reaped—in this as in all things.

But how be tolerant of intolerance? If you meet intolerance with intolerance you get the first intolerance returned to you twofold. The opposite force in greater measure overcomes its opposite. Evil is overcome with good, not with more evil; darkness with light, not with more darkness; dryness with wetness, not with more dryness. A soft answer turneth away wrath,—not more wrath.

Or to put it differently: Sometimes we think our self-assertiveness is justified because we have honestly faced the facts on both sides of a question, and, therefore, have more right to judge than our intolerant neighbor who refuses to see more than one side. Nevertheless we must not forget that our self-assertiveness impresses him in his walled-in mind as intolerance, and according to perfectly invariable law produces fruit after its kind. He becomes more intolerant, we grow really intolerant, and the coming of the Kingdom of God is deferred. Reasonableness is not enough. We must attain to that "sweet reasonableness" which Matthew Arnold set forth as the very essence of the Christian spirit.

The beauty of the theosophical conception of spiritual life is that it is verifiable at each step. This is because it is based on law and is as legitimate a subject of experiment as any other of the facts of nature. There is nothing up in the air about it, as some think who have never tried verification. Therefore if you doubt that tolerance and "sweet reasonableness" are the best antidote for the poison of self-assertiveness, try both tolerance and self-assertion in turn, and as many other means as suggest themselves to you. After at least half a dozen experiments of each method sum up your results.

Another objection to self-assertiveness which will appeal to some is that it is vulgar. In the very nature of it, it is crude, unrefined, and unsocial. Carlyle puts it bluntly enough in the following passage from *Sartor Resartus*. "Shall Courtesy be done only to the rich, and only by the rich? In Good-breeding, which differs, if at all, from High-breeding, only as it gracefully remembers the rights of others, rather than gracefully insists on its own rights, I discern no special connection with wealth or birth: but rather that it lies in human nature itself, and is due from all men toward all men. Of a truth, were your Schoolmaster at his post, and worth anything when there, this, with so much else, would be reformed. Nay, each man were then also his neighbor's schoolmaster; till at

length a rude-visaged, unmannered Peasant could no more be met with, than a Peasant unacquainted with botanical Physiology, or who felt not that the clod he broke was created in Heaven."

I remember an analogy of George Eliot which bears in the same direction. She likens the man who monopolizes the conversation to one who would seize and devour all the food at a feast. Moreover everyone knows that a good listener is a great social asset.

But surely, it is objected, this is too strong. Self-assertion is nothing more than the expression of individuality. Self-expression, without which no worthy work could be done, no art developed;—nay the very worlds would not have come into being.

Hardly a paradox, I think. Let us give the last word to our own Emerson. "Insist on yourself," he says. "Never imitate." But again: "It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps *with perfect sweetness* the independence of solitude." L. E. P.

ANSWER.—It is not *assertion* that is wrong but *self*-assertion. One must learn to assert the higher not the lower self. Very often I feel that a certain result can best be brought about in a certain way. Some one questions or disputes that way, and suggests another. I then become positive that the way I propose is the only way. But sometimes the other person's way is adopted. After some weeks I discover that I had been eager, not to accomplish the desired end in the best way but to do it in *my* way. That is self-assertion. It is wrong.

SPENSER MONTAGUE.

ANSWER.—Were evil practices and evil opinions ever overcome by self-assertion? Yes, if we use the words "self-assertion" in their truly occult meaning. For what except the assertion, the domination, of the real self can ever bring about a lasting change? But there is nothing noisy, nothing personal, nothing aggressive about such assertion. It consists in *being* the higher self, quietly, continuously, not in shouldering one's way to the front. Truly great men have certainly "asserted" something of this higher self. For some of them this crowning experience came when they were unknown to the world, came in the quiet of the inner life. They were not always able to maintain that connection when the world, recognising this genuine power, called them out to do it service. Sometimes they forsook the substance for the shadow. Looking on with sympathetic understanding, we ought to be able to distinguish between the life lived from above, for the soul, and that lived from below, for personal gratification. Aggression is of the very essence of personality, it never could make a man great. I. E. P.

QUESTION 142.—*What, briefly, is the Theosophical attitude toward the life of the soul after death?*

ANSWER.—A prolonged experience of our Society's endeavors has taught me that no one would be justified in stating the particulars of the Theosophical attitude toward any single question. The Constitution of the Society defines its attitude in a broad way, as that of unprejudiced, tolerant and therefore impersonal inquiry. The moment anyone of us undertakes to state *the* Theosophical attitude, he comes so near dogmatising that whatever the correctness of his statement his answer contains an element endangering the very essence and *raison d'etre* of the whole Theosophical movement. But I can state with some confidence the view that is held by many *members* of the Society, and which I also share. To my mind, we must not allow our imaginations to set any barriers between the life of

the soul before and after death. The entire thing with its ebb and flow, its manifest and its invisible conditions, must be taken as a whole. The soul forever goes through an infinite variety of experience, running the chromatic scale of consciousness, every sharp and flat, every minor and major key of which is the best adapted to afford the soul an opportunity for growth and for final glorification. After death we may be radiantly and fully conscious, or torpidly half conscious, we may be happy or miserable, during protracted periods or only in glimpses; and all this for the simple reason that the life of the soul after death must be at least as varied as our present individual lives. Yet one law governs all destinies and regulates all relations; the strict appositeness of cause and effect. This is the all-seeing eye of Providence. This is Karma. In life and after death we are never too far from this law for its immediate operation and we are never isolated enough from each other for our influence on each other not to be as immediate and as inevitable. V. J.

QUESTION 143.—*What, briefly, is the teaching of Buddha about the states after death; and where may an authentic account of that teaching be found?*

ANSWER.—In speaking of "the states after death" the questioner does not make it quite clear whether the states immediately following physical death are meant, or the final state, Nirvana, which represents the ultimate conquest and goal.

In either case, the question is rendered very difficult by two factors: first, the far-reaching failure of a large section of the followers of the Buddha to understand the teachings of their Master, just as large bodies of those who call themselves Christians are far from understanding the ideals and purposes of the Christ; secondly, the further distortion and materialization of these already distorted teachings, by Western students whose minds were full of eighteenth century materialism, and who saw the Buddha's teachings through the twofold mists of European skepticism, and the materialism and nihilism of the Southern Buddhists. The truth is, that the work of interpreting the teachings of Buddhism will have to be done all over again.

As to the teaching of Buddhism concerning the states immediately following death, a good deal of information will be found in Schlagentweit's book on Tibetan Buddhism. Schlagentweit mentions Devachan, the paradise between two lives, some half dozen times, and explains that "Devachan" means, in Tibetan, "the blissful," corresponding to the Sanskrit Sukhâvatî. A further description of this "blissful state" is found in the *Sukhâvatî-vyûha,* a Sanskrit Buddhist text discovered in Japan, and translated in the 49th volume of the *Sacred Books of the East.* This description strongly recalls that of the New Jerusalem, in the *Revelation of Saint John,* the same symbolism, based on the significance of precious stones and their colors being used.

The states of punishment after death, the hot and cold hells, and so forth, which are really states of consciousness (sometimes entered in nightmares, delirium and so on), are described in many Buddhist books; for example, in the *Temiya Jâtaka,* in which the Buddha describes certain states of punishment and purification which he himself had passed through.

As to the ultimate state of Nirvana, the subject is too great to enter on, here. It must be approached through an understanding of the spiritual development of India, and of the race from which the Buddha came: the red Rajputs. The best approach to this subject, on the part of a Western scholar, is that in *The Creed of Buddha,* which the present querent is strongly urged to study.

C. J.

THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society was held at the Brevoort Hotel, New York City, on April 27, 1912.

MORNING SESSION

The Convention, having been called in accordance with the Constitution, was declared to be in session at 10.35 A. M., by Mr. Charles Johnston, Chairman of the Executive Committee.

Temporary Organization

On motion of Mr. Hargrove, Mr. Johnston was chosen as temporary Chairman and Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell as temporary Secretary.

On motion the Chair appointed a Committee on Credentials consisting of the Secretary, Mrs. Ada Gregg; the Treasurer, Mr. H. B. Mitchell, and Miss Perkins of New York.

While the Committee on Credentials was preparing its report Mr. Johnston welcomed the delegates.

Address of Welcome

It is the privilege of the Chairman of the Executive Committee to welcome the members of the Convention. During many years, there has never been a Convention which has so filled me with hope, a Convention which has so definitely pointed forward to a splendid future.

As it has been my duty, year by year, to utter words of warning and counsel, so it is my privilege now to speak of splendid hopes and luminous vistas opening before us. I shall, in the report of the Executive Committee, give a more detailed account of the visits, which the last Convention authorized me to make, to numerous Branches in the Old World and the New, but I may anticipate that report so far as to say that at every point I found clear evidence that we are face to face with opportunities greater and richer in promise than at any time in the long and troublous history of The Theosophical Society, opportunities such as have rarely fallen to the lot of mortals. "Prophets and kings have desired to see the things that we see, and have not seen them."

Our chief concern should be to fit ourselves to meet this splendid opportunity, careful lest any shortcoming or obtuseness of ours, any failure clearly to discern and wisely to perform, should stand between us and our hope, between the design of the Founders of The Theosophical Society and its accomplishment. We must ever keep in heart and mind Mme. Blavatsky's wise words of warning in *The Key to Theosophy:* "I spoke rather of the great need which our successors in the guidance of the Society will have of unbiased and clear judgment. Every such attempt as the Theosophical Society has hitherto ended in failure, because, sooner

or later, it has degenerated into a sect, set up hard-and-fast dogmas of its own, and so lost by imperceptible degrees that vitality which living truth alone can impart. You must remember that all our members have been bred and born in some creed or religion, that all are more or less of their generation both physically and mentally, and consequently that their judgment is but too likely to be warped and unconsciously biased by some or all of these influences. If, then, they cannot be freed from such inherent bias, or at least taught to recognize it instantly and so avoid being led astray by it, the result can only be that the Society will drift off on to some sandbank of thought or another, and there remain a stranded carcass to moulder and die."

We must recognize that The Theosophical Society should be *the spiritual organ of humanity;* that its destiny is, at each epoch, at each hour, to discern and meet humanity's instant need; to supply the spiritual impulse, the spiritual sustenance, which that hour requires; to form the channel through which there shall be, for each day, its supernatural bread.

The sense of our obligation and responsibility should fill us with awe, with a new sense of consecration, and we should humbly determine in our hearts that no tolerated sin of ours shall stand in the way of this high mission and destiny.

Report of the Committee on Credentials

The Committee on Credentials then reported that it had examined and approved the credentials submitted. Some expected foreign proxies were missing and were believed to have been lost on the Titanic. But the following 31 Branches, entitled to cast a total of 235 votes, were represented by delegates or proxies.

Aurora, Oakland, Calif.
Blavatsky, Washington, D. C.
Blavatsky, Seattle, Wash.
Brehon, Detroit, Mich.
Cincinnati, Cincinnati, O.
Dayton, Dayton, O.
Fort Wayne. Fort Wayne, Ind.
H. P. B., Toledo, O.
Indianapolis, Indianapolis. Ind.
Middletown, Middletown, O.
New York, New York, N. Y.
Pacific, Los Angeles, Calif.
Providence, Providence, R. I.
Queen City, Seattle, Wash.
Shila, Toledo, O.
Southern, Greensboro, N. C.
Stockton, Stockton, Calif.
Toronto, Toronto, Canada.
Virya, Denver, Colo.
Unity, Indianapolis, Ind.
Venezuelan, Caracas, Venezuela.
British National Branch.
The T. S. in Norway.
The T. S. in Sweden.
Berlin, Berlin, Germany.
North Berlin, Berlin, Germany.
Dresden, Dresden, Germany.
Flensburg, Flensburg, Germany.
Munchen, Munchen, Germany.
Neusalz, Neusalz, Germany.
Suhl, Suhl, Germany.

On motion the report was received and the committee discharged with thanks.

Permanent Organization

On motion of Mr. Griscom, Mr. H. B. Mitchell of New York was unanimously elected permanent Chairman and the temporary Secretary was made permanent Secretary.

Mr. H. B. Mitchell then took the chair.

On motion the Chair appointed the following committees:

Committee on Nominations:
Mr. C. A. Griscom, Jr., Chairman.
Miss Hohnstedt of Cincinnati.
Mrs. Regan of Providence.

Committee on Resolutions:
Mr. E. T. Hargrove, Chairman.
Mrs. Gitt of Washington.
Mrs. Moulton of Toledo.

Committee on Letters of Greeting:
Dr. C. C. Clark, Chairman.
Mrs. Sheldon of Providence.
Mrs. Allison of New York.

These committees were instructed to meet and report at the afternoon session. The Chair then called for the reports of the officers of the Society.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Mr. Charles Johnston, Chairman of the Executive Committee, presented the

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
FOR THE YEAR ENDING APRIL 27, 1912

The Executive Committee has to make a report full of good tidings and of hope. First, to put on record that, as far as the organization of our parts is concerned, we have at last completely regained the Constitutional status originally laid down for us, as an international Federation of self-governing Branches. At the beginning of this year, four Branch Charters were issued, which clearly illustrate this restored status. One was to a Branch in the North of England, which had been a part, first of the old separate National Society, and later, of the English National Branch. It is now a direct Branch of the International Society. A Charter was issued to a Branch in Norway, and another to a Branch in Austria, with exactly the same significance; and, finally, a Charter was issued to an added Branch in South America, showing the growth of new Branches direct from the original stem.

Last year, the Convention directed the Executive Committee to make provision for visits to the different Branches of the Society, in both hemispheres. These visits were paid, in the course of the summer and autumn, by the Chairman of the Committee, who met Branches in Bavaria, Austria, Saxony, Prussia, Norway, Sweden and England, and met members in other parts of Europe also. In every country, the visitor was conscious of new fields ripe for the reaper, of still untouched riches waiting to be drawn upon.

In November, visits were made to Branches in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and Canada, and everywhere the same marvellous situation was evident. There are, on all hands, those ready and eager for what we have to give. It is our most responsible privilege to see to it that we are able to give just what they need, in the best conceivable way. We have a superb opportunity to meet or to mar.

Let this great opportunity be greatly met. Let us see to it that the Light shall shine in our hearts; let us be filled with the living water. Above all, let us guard against the danger, so eloquently pointed out by Mme. Blavatsky: the danger of becoming ossified, of losing our living perception of living needs, with the living power to supply them.

Great is our responsibility, high our destiny; let us humbly, selflessly, reverently fit ourselves to meet it.

CHARLES JOHNSTON, *Chairman.*

On motion of Mr. Hargrove, seconded by Mrs. Griscom, the report was accepted and the thanks of the Convention were extended to Mr. Johnston. Carried unanimously, the delegates standing.

The Secretary of the Theosophical Society, Mrs. Ada Gregg, then reported as follows:

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY
FOR THE YEAR ENDING APRIL 27, 1912

New Branches and Members

The Secretary begs to report that during the preceding year diplomas have

been issued to 112 new members, as follows: In the United States, 39; in South America, 25; in Canada, 4; in Germany, 32; in England, 3; in Scotland, 3; in Norway, 1; in Sweden, 7. Total, 114.

During the same period the Society has lost by resignation 23 and by death 6.

Since the last Convention charters have been issued to three (3) new Branches, as follows:

The British National Branch, Newcastle, England, chartered January 1, 1912.

Aurvanga Branch, Christiania, Norway, chartered January 1, 1912.

Aussig Branch, Austria, chartered January 1, 1912.

Correspondence

The arrival of the postman is always eagerly anticipated at the Secretary's office—as it indicates the most urgent work of the day. It all appeals to the Secretary's heart—whether letters of inquiry about Theosophy and The Theosophical Society,—or how to become a member,—or asking advice for study—or inquiries whether there is a Branch or Branch members near the writers to whom they can apply for help in their studies—or letters expressing interest in our united work—or letters of gratitude for the inspiring and sustaining bond of fellowship, of which the earnest member daily grows more conscious, and which finds its expression in communicating and sharing his newly found joy with others. They are all interesting because of their varied character, coming from all parts of the world and suggesting a harmony and an inner unity of purpose and a loyal willingness to give all possible help.

The Book and Magazine Department

The business department of our work—the search for and the supplying of books—the care of the stock—the keeping accounts of the books sold—the correspondence and necessary work in the distribution of the QUARTERLY, are all steadily increasing and consequently demanding more of the Secretary's time and strength. It is a very willing service which makes new friends and extends the influence of our literature as well as yielding satisfactory results financially.

It is very gratifying to record that the sale of books exceeds the number sold in any previous year—the demand being principally for the text books of the Society—on Science and Religion, but especially for the devotional books of all Religions, and books that have been favored by the review department of the QUARTERLY.

The Secretary has been abundantly rewarded for the time and effort expended in assembling the magazines published during the early years of the Society, and which contain so much that is instructive and inspiring—the thought of the East responding to the call of the West in its search for light and help in solving the problems of life.

One complete set of these magazines—*Path, Lucifer* and *Theosophist*—substantially bound, forms the nucleus of an extensive library—for the enterprising members of Berlin.

Two complete sets of these old magazines are nearing completion and are longed for with a great degree of impatience by the two members who ordered them.

Two extra sets of the *Path* have been supplied to private libraries, and correspondence with two other collectors of these magazines justifies the hope of supplying other sets of this legacy left to us by W. Q. Judge and his helpers. I trust that all members who can aid in the assembling and distribution of these valuable records will communicate with the Secretary.

The Theosophical Quarterly

THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY—the crowning work of our endeavor—next

claims our attention. Through the continued interest and faithful co-operation of Branches, individual members, and friends of the QUARTERLY, the circulation has greatly increased. We are encouraged by the renewal of subscriptions by many of the libraries and the appreciation expressed by them and their readers. Many who chance upon the QUARTERLY for the first time find that it appeals to them, and its reading is followed by an application for information regarding The Theosophical Society and the conditions of membership therein. Such messages daily coming to the attention of this office convince the workers there that no better work can be done for Theosophy than by placing the QUARTERLY upon the tables of the libraries—an encouraging work—of vital interest to every member.

From the comment of our exchanges we also find the same note of appreciation. A new applicant for this favor assures us that the QUARTERLY should be widely circulated, "for it is always filled with interesting and learned contributions to Theosophical Literature."

Other magazines are praying for the privilege of translating and publishing its articles into various languages, thus enlarging its field of usefulness as an educator and helper.

The Secretary is constantly besieged with requests that readers be made acquainted with the contributors to the QUARTERLY who have awakened their minds, nourished their souls, or who have brought peace, hope and joy and aroused the desire to share in the work of building higher ideals and uniting all who are isolated into closer bonds of fellowship. It seems evident that the spirit of its pages has entered into the hearts of its readers.

Bound sets of the QUARTERLY are continually being asked for and to supply this demand has been, and continues to be, quite a problem, as many numbers are out of print. It has been made possible sometimes by the response of members where more than one copy has been sent to the same family. The Secretary is very grateful for the response and forbearance to so many requests in this direction, and she expresses the earnest hope that all members who have broken sets of the QUARTERLY will kindly report them.

A Word of Gratitude

In reviewing the work of the year I gladly acknowledge the valuable help given me by one of our devoted members, Mrs. Margaret T. Gordon, who has shared the duties and pleasures coming to us each day, and is a witness to the many words of appreciation—little kindnesses which reach the heart—letters of encouragement, that inspire and sustain us in our work. I also desire to acknowledge continued, constant and helpful advice and assistance from my faithful associates in office.

Respectfully submitted,

ADA GREGG, *Secretary.*

In presenting this report the Secretary asked permission to read an extract from a letter, typical of many received, showing the high value of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY to isolated members.

"Mrs. Ada Gregg, Secretary Theosophical Society.

"DEAR MADAM:

"It has been some time since I have written you and my neglect has caused me considerable annoyance when I recall the kindly helpfulness which your correspondence gave me. I can only plead weakness as the cause; and regret my inability and lack of time to give the work more attention and assistance. * * *

"The magazines have been a source of much comfort and instruction and I will continue to study them. Having no students to consort with my progress

is necessarily slow, but through it all I see a great and noble work and I hope to become better acquainted with it.

"The 'Letters to Friends' articles seem to have been written for my special benefit, and I am coming to realize my weakness and moral cowardice, along with my strength, as I have never before realized them. * * *"

On motion of Mr. Griscom, carried unanimously by a rising vote, the sincere thanks of the Society were extended to Mrs. Gregg for her untiring devotion and most efficient work.

Mr. Johnston expressed the thanks of the Society to Mrs. Gordon for her able assistance to the Secretary.

Mr. Johnston then took the chair while the Treasurer, Mr. H. B. Mitchell, reported as follows:

REPORT OF THE TREASURER OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
APRIL 29, 1911, *to* APRIL 26, 1912

Receipts		*Disbursements*	
Dues	$703.10	Secretary's Office	$278.20
Contributions	512.60	THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY (3 issues) and printing	918.56
THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY	337.82	Toward Expenses of Delegates to Visit Foreign Branches	200.00
Balance, April 28, 1911	681.60	Balance, April 26, 1912	838.36
	$2,235.12		$2,235.12

[Signed] H. B. MITCHELL, *Treasurer.*

April 27, 1912.

In presenting this report the Treasurer called attention to the fact that only three issues of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY had been charged against the year's disbursements, as the bill for the April issue had not been presented. Estimating this at $300, the net balance would appear as $538.36, or about $150 less than that with which the year was started.

Comparing the present statement with that of a year ago, it would be noted that the contributions had fallen from approximately $850 to $512. This the Treasurer attributed to a reduction in the receipts from the Mite-boxes. Unless these boxes were frequently renewed a certain percentage of them would be torn or lost; and unless reminded of them members would forget. The Treasurer had made no effort to solicit contributions, or to urge the continued use of the boxes. It was his opinion that so long as the moneys received were sufficient to meet the Society's expenses it was best to hold the pressing of the mite-box collections in reserve for a time of crisis or for special needs.

The Treasurer desired in closing to express his grateful sense of indebtedness to Mr. Karl D. Perkins and Miss Isabel E. Perkins for their constant and self-sacrificing assistance in the work of the Treasurership.

Upon motion the Report of the Treasurer was accepted, and a unanimous vote was passed expressing the thanks of the Society for the services of the Treasurer and his assistants, Mr. and Miss Perkins.

On motion the Convention adjourned until 2.30 P. M.

AFTERNOON SESSION

On reconvening, Mr. Griscom, Chairman of the Committee on Nominations, presented the following names in nomination.

Election of Officers

For the Executive Committee, to fill two vacancies:
Mr. Charles Johnston—to succeed himself.
Mr. E. T. Hargrove—to succeed Mr. Birger Elwing.
For Treasurer: Mr. H. B. Mitchell.
For Secretary: Mrs. Ada Gregg.

On motion of Mr. Michaelis the Secretary was instructed unanimously to cast one ballot for the above nominees. On this being done they were declared elected and the Committee on Nominations was discharged with thanks.

Report of the Committee on Resolutions

Mr. Hargrove, Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions, introduced the following:

Resolved, That Mr. Charles Johnston, as Chairman of the Executive Committee, is requested hereby to reply to the messages of greeting from foreign branches in the name of and on behalf of this Convention; and to extend to the Conventions of the European branches our fraternal greetings and good wishes.

And:

Resolved, That this Convention of the Theosophical Society hereby requests and authorizes visits of the officers of the Society to branches in Europe and America.

Mrs. Gitt of Washington spoke of the desire of the Blavatsky Branch to have the older members visit them, and in particular Mr. Hargrove.

Mr. Hargrove in reply expressed the earnest desire of all in New York to visit the other branches, all of which were doing such splendid work. Although immensely difficult to take such trips it was hoped that it would be possible next fall.

These resolutions were then carried unanimously and the thanks of the Convention extended to the Committee.

REPORTS OF DELEGATES

Blavatsky Branch, Washington, D. C.

Mrs. Gitt spoke of the harmonious spirit of the Blavatsky Branch, Washington. Weekly meetings and two lectures, followed by discussion, had been held. The subjects, sometimes Scriptural, such as "My sheep hear My voice," are advertised and had drawn a number of Church people. It is one aim of the Blavatsky Branch to reconcile its members to their own Churches, interpreting their ritual and beliefs in the light of Theosophy. Mrs. Gitt mentioned the religious unrest among the women of Washington and their desire for more light. She suggested that study classes with open discussion would be of great value to the Churches, in both increasing their membership and arousing the clergy.

Cincinnati Branch

Miss Hohnstedt reported a very active and harmonious year for the Cincinnati Branch, the work this year having been better than for many past. The present membership is 32. Public lectures, with advertised subjects, are held weekly, with discussions which are of great interest and value. A study class also meets weekly and there is a monthly class in which members meet visitors. There is a circulating library of 200 books and the Quarterly is placed in eight libraries and with one newsdealer.

H. P. B. Branch, Toledo. O.

The report of Mrs. Moulton, President of the H. P. B. Branch at Toledo, showed a most gratifying spirit of energy and activity there. With a membership of 27, meetings are held weekly on Sunday afternoons, open to the public except once a month. A class meets on Thursdays to study the *Secret Doctrine,* and on Wednesdays a class studies the *Key to Theosophy.* On Tuesdays members are privileged to use a library of 72 volumes. Five new members were gained during the year and two lost through removal from the city.

Mrs. Lang, a member of the Toledo Branch from 1892 to 1898 but not since then a member of the Theosophical Society, delighted the delegates with her story of the man who described the chief doctrines of Theosophy as "Karma and Recrimination." Mrs. Lang recommended an Emerson study class as a means of getting new members.

Providence Branch

Meetings open to the public are held every Sunday night with an average attendance of 15 to 20. Mrs. Sheldon referred to the difficulty of forming a branch and to the lack of outside interest. They hold to the teaching of Karma, Reincarnation, Brotherhood and Solidarity, as presented in the writings of Madame Blavatsky. A study class meets weekly.

Middletown Branch

It was inspiring to hear from Mrs. Gordon of the work of the Middletown Branch, whose blind President, Mrs. Roberts, is a center of spiritual light in her community. Semi-monthly meetings are held, at which sometimes only two were present, but the meetings were always regularly opened and closed as though many were present. The new members are very enthusiastic.

Fort Wayne Branch

Mr. Michaelis spoke of the pleasure and inspiration which a recent visit to the Fort Wayne Branch had given him.

A Member at Large

The power of the theosophic spirit was interestingly illustrated in what was said by Miss Richmond. Although there is no branch at her home and her friends did not even know the word "Theosophy," two of them felt that she had something that they wanted to have also, and asked that they might study it. Miss Richmond spoke also of the great joy that comes from the work.

Stockton Branch

The greetings of the Stockton Branch were presented to the Convention by Mrs. Hopkins.

The New York Branch

Upon motion, the Chairman was asked to speak to the Convention as President of the New York Branch and upon its work.

Mr. Mitchell said that though he was the President of the Branch, Mr. Hargrove was the Chairman for its meetings, and would be able to speak of its work better than he himself could. Perhaps the members of no other Branch of the Society were engaged in more widely varying forms of theosophic activity, and for this reason it was peculiarly difficult to report upon their work. Formally, as a Branch, meetings were held fortnightly with an average attendance of about twenty or twenty-five. A printed syllabus of topics had been followed, but this syllabus gave only the sequence of topics, without assigning a definite date to each. In this way the Branch was free to dwell for a number of meetings in

succession upon a single subject. This often proved to be very advantageous, as it gave opportunity for full discussion and more thorough consideration of the questions raised. The topics chosen were all expressive of some aspect of Theosophy, and had given rise to very interesting meetings. They were as follows:

I. Theosophy and the Individual.
   (1) Theosophy and Karma.
   (2) Duty in the light of Theosophy.
   (3) Theosophy as related to Joy and Pain.
   (4) Theosophy as an Attitude.
II. The Social Aspects of Theosophy.
   (1) Theosophy, the Home, and Social Obligations.
   (2) Theosophy and Education.
   (3) Theosophy and Modern Business.
   (4) Theosophists in History.
III. Theosophy and Modern Science.
IV. Theosophy and Christianity.
   (1) Their Origin.
   (2) Their larger Interpretation of each other.
   (3) Their Goal.
V. Theosophy as a Spiritual Synthesis.

In addition to the formal Branch meetings, there were a great number of informal activities, which could not properly be regarded as Branch work but which were expressive of the work of the Theosophic Movement. Such was the work of the local members for THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, the giving of addresses before different religious or educational bodies, contributions to secular magazines and the like. They were impossible to enumerate but Mr. Mitchell hoped that many of the visiting delegates might remain long enough in New York to become personally acquainted with some of them.

Mr. Mitchell believed that the work in New York might be described as the effort to carry the spirit of Theosophy and the light of Theosophy into all departments of the members' lives, and to demonstrate by practical example the dynamic power of this spirit and the value of this light. It was a work of most profound interest and far reaching effect.

The membership of the Branch was now 51, having considerably increased in the last year.

The Chair then called upon Mr. E. T. Hargrove, the Chairman of the New York Branch.

Mr. E. T. Hargrove then said:

"Speaking on behalf of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society, perhaps the most important feature of our work is the effort to make it clear to all visitors that Theosophy does not consist of a new set of dogmas, but that it is the light of Truth itself which can be used to illuminate all attempts to express the truth. Theosophy means Divine Wisdom. The Theosophical Society is a free platform, and the only free platform in the world, where people can meet without prejudice, no matter what their views or preconceptions, for the discussion of the truth as they personally see it. A number of members, myself included, have found in the writing of Madame Blavatsky and of Mr. Judge immense help in the formulation of the truth as we are able to recognize it. We owe them more than I, for one, can ever express. But it would be a fatal mistake to suppose that the writings of those two famous members have authority in the Society as such. It was not their purpose to add a new creed to the list of creeds with which the world is already over-burdened. No one would have been

more horrified than they, if, instead of the spirit, the dead letter of what they wrote had been regarded as authoritative or final. If we would be loyal to them, we should ask ourselves not so much what they said twenty years ago in this book or that, but what would they say today if they were alive and working with us outwardly? Not that Truth itself ever changes; but of one thing we may be certain—that those who know the Truth, speak it in response to the needs and understanding of their hearers; and it would be absurd to suppose that the world has stood still since 1875. To maintain that would be to maintain, incidentally, that the work of Madame Blavatsky and of Mr. Judge was a failure. It was not. It was a marvellous success. Consequently, if they were physically with us today, they would no longer speak as to a Kindergarten, but as to those whom they had helped to pass from that low grade to a higher. 'There is no revelation but the ever-continuing.' That was said of Christianity by Robertson of Brighton—a famous clergyman of his day. And if that obviously be true of the Christian religion, surely we would not have it less true of Divine Wisdom, or of those who tried to remind us that it exists and can be found—not in any book or in any collection of books, but in the great book of Life and by communion with the spirit of life which is also the spirit concealed within the heart of each one of us."

The Theosophical Quarterly

The Chair asked Mr. Griscom as Editor of The Theosophical Quarterly to report upon its work.

Mr. Griscom stated that while it was a great pleasure to report upon The Theosophical Quarterly to the Convention, he always felt that he could but repeat what he had said many times in the past. The thing most on his mind was gratitude to the friends who contributed most of the articles and did the major portion of the work, and of these, without making any invidious comparison, he would single out Mr. Johnston for his articles and Miss Isabel E. Perkins, who had done yeoman service in proof-reading and many other ways.

The circulation of the magazine has increased steadily, and it now goes to nearly every country in the world, and the office is continually in receipt of very comforting and admiring letters of commendation.

One of the things of interest about the magazine is that hardly in its history has the editor known a month before publication what the forthcoming number would contain, and never once has he had sufficient material on hand to get out two numbers.

The new series of articles called "Letters to Friends" has been especially appreciated, some five or six letters having been received within the last few days from different parts of the world, and in each the writer said that he felt that these letters had been especially directed to him, or her, for several of the writers were women.

The past year has seen the completion of Mr. Johnston's notable translation and commentary of the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali,* which, Mr. Griscom was glad to say, would soon be accessible in book form, adding one more to the already considerable number of standard editions of Eastern scriptures which have first appeared in The Theosophical Quarterly.

On motion of Mr. Michaelis an enthusiastic vote of thanks was unanimously given Mr. Griscom for his brilliant and untiring work in the editorship of The Theosophical Quarterly.

The Chair then called for

Addresses by Local Members

Mr. Maine spoke of Dr. Holmes' poem on the chambered nautilus, compar-

ing it with the growth of the soul. So every living organization or society must outgrow its shell and continually "build more stately mansions."

Mr. Perkins said that ever since last year's Convention he had been looking forward to this one and to the pleasure which seeing again the friends then made, would bring him.

Mr. Perkins was followed by Mr. Russ, Mr. Alden, Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell and Mrs. Allison, who spoke of the concrete application of Theosophy as a spirit; first, in the spirit of detachment and then in the revivifying by this Spirit, of the old forms.

Report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting and Reports from Branches.

The Committee on Letters of Greeting, through Dr. Clark, its Chairman, reported the receipt of telegraphic greetings from Mr. Hjalmar Julin on behalf of the Branch at Arvika, Sweden, and from Dr. Keightley on behalf of the English members.

In addition, the Committee submitted the following Letters of Greeting and Reports:

British National Branch

London, England.

To the Theosophical Society, in Convention Assembled.

Dear Fellow Members:

On behalf of the members of the British National Branch I forward greetings to you in your Convention and heartiest wishes for your successful and prosperous deliberation. The work of the Society goes slowly and quietly, but the influence of the Theosophical Movement is spread far and wide. The one difficulty that we have to contend with is to preserve constantly before our eyes the spiritual ideal. We can see on every hand the influence of this movement, but unfortunately, the lack of the spiritual ideal has caused the external movement to degenerate into a materialized form, and this degeneration can but result in the movement losing touch with the real benefit to mankind.

If your deliberations can but suggest some effective means by which those who are touched by the Theosophical movement may become obedient to the true principles of the Wisdom religion a great and lasting good will have been accomplished.

With renewed good wishes,

Yours fraternally,

Archibald Keightley,
General Secretary British National Branch.

The Theosophical Society in Norway

Christiania, Norway.

The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled.

Comrades:

Among the many questions that, at the time of the Annual Convention, attract our attention and claim a deeper consideration, perhaps that of the best way of accomplishing our work, of fulfilling our duties as members of The Theosophical Society, is the one that is most prevalent in our minds. We examine our past work in order to learn in what way we have failed, and we consider what we ought to do in the future. This we are doing as a Society, as Branches and as individuals. We are aware of mistakes, of moments of slackened devotion, or of lost opportunities, etc., etc. We feel that, in our daily life, we have not been thorough in practising silence, prudence, temperance and compassion.

And having become conscious of our shortcomings, we try to understand their meaning and to learn from them; and by so doing we gather wisdom and strength for our future work. And having thus learned the lessons of the past year well, we are making a fresh promise, a solemn vow in which we put all our strength, to do better in the future.

When our work in the past year is ended in this way, a real step towards the Path has been taken, and we can have fair hope of being able to take a longer stride in the coming year.

Are we to grieve and to think that we have accomplished small things only? Is it not that we have accomplished just that much, which we were able to do? Is it a small thing to add something to the experience of the Soul, and to its power of manifesting itself in the outer world? Verily, to the Soul it is a great thing, since the step taken is just the thing wanted for its further progress;—it is a great thing, because a barrier in our way has been removed.

This understood, we should, after every such revisal of our lives, rejoice as Members, as Branches and as a Society,—ever rejoice, remembering these words of Cavé: "We are closest to the heart of things when we are happy! when in spite of trials and adversities a fountain of joy and gladness springs up within."

Therefore: "Let us lay aside every weight and press toward the mark."

A greeting of sympathy and thankfulness from your Norwegian Comrades.

Fraternally, THOS. KNOFF.

BERLIN BRANCH

Berlin, Germany.

The most important event which has occurred during the past year was the union of our three branches: Berlin, North Berlin and Steglitz-Berlin. The good results of the combined forces showed themselves directly. Our public lectures and study classes were very well attended, in spite of the fact that no advertising was done as formerly. Our financial condition was so much improved that we were able to renovate our Society rooms and make them more comfortable and attractive. The public lectures were attended on an average by 70 persons, the study classes by 45. Several lecturers were not members of The Theosophical Society and we are highly indebted to them for their interesting remarks. Several members have done effective work by mailing programmes and pamphlets, where some interest was surmised. The social meetings of members were a great success. While enjoying a cup of coffee or chocolate prepared and served by the ladies of the Branch, the events of the day that were connected with the Theosophical movement were discussed. Reports of lectures given by other societies, which had been visited by the members, proved especially interesting. The meetings were interspersed with music and humor.

Berlin Branch has a membership of 127 at present. During the year 13 new members, not belonging to any of the former Branches, have been admitted.

Those of us who believe in the spiritual basis of the Theosophical Society and in the Masters are conscious of the fact that *inner* progress is *true* success. None of us can measure this progress, only the Masters are capable of doing so, for this inner progress is the result of the united forces of the whole Theosophical Movement all over the earth, of which we are only a very small part.

PAUL RAATZ, *President.*
SANDOR WEISS, *Secretary.*

MUNICH BRANCH

Munich, Germany.

To the Members of the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled.

The Theosophical Society, Branch Munich, is sending best brotherly greet-

ings. It is impossible for any of the members to be present, but in our spirit of Theosophy we are gathered together. May the Master grant his help and blessings to the conference and resolutions of our brethren.

Branch Munich is working in its simple ways and is delighted to help the growth of Theosophy in favour with God and man.

With brotherly greeting,

HANS FRÖHLICH,
Secretary of Branch Munich.

SCHRECKENSTEIN BRANCH

Schreckenstein, Austria.

To the Members of the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled.

DEAR FRIENDS AND FELLOW MEMBERS:

You are met here, not only to carry out works of organization, but also to do a much higher work, to gather the clearest rays of the spiritual part of the heart from every single member, assembled here, in aspiration after the union with the Over-Soul.

Every one will give his best and this union of the clearest spiritual individual powers will be a help for the totality as also for the individuals. Every one will offer all the highest of his heart and every one will receive much more. May the Masters crown this assembly with a spiritual diadem, and give you their peace, that all the glory, magnificence and love of God may extend over you through them. And may every one be endowed with new strength for the fight in his practical life.

Though we are outwardly separated from you at this time, yet we shall be with you in heart and soul.

We wish your deliberations all success, and are, with cordial greetings,

Ever yours,

HERMANN ZERNDT.

VENEZUELAN BRANCH

Caracas, Venezuela.

To the Members of the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled.

In the course of the years 1911 to 1912 the Theosophic movement has remained bright in Venezuela. This result has been obtained from the constant diffusion of books and by the interest realized by each member of the Branch in behalf of the Eastern ideas. It is clearly understood that we should have reached better success if the notable review, THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, could be read in the Spanish language. Its articles, full of life and spirit, are scarcely known by the very reduced number of the readers of the English language. It is the same with authors of works in our Society. They are almost ignored. "Letters that Have Helped Me" and "Echoes of the East," by Mr. W. Q. Judge, and the "Memory of Past Births," by Mr. Charles Johnston, only are known. In consideration of such difficulty, arisen from the difference of idiom, some friends have determined to translate, by little and little, the works of our writers of North America, so that by that way they may realize the nature of the work and the integrity and purity of the doctrine founded in the West by the Masters, H. P. B. and W. Q. J.

Notwithstanding the difficulties above mentioned, the "Venezuela" Branch is augmenting every day the number of its members. In a very short time it already reckons more than one hundred associates and very soon the brethren of Alta gracia de Orituco will form new Branches, with study hall and library, and also those of Cindad Bolivar and San Carlos. The movement assumes a clear form,

definite and concrete, in organizing and multiplying its active centers in sundry places of the Republic. It is probable that on the formation of the Branches above mentioned, others will follow.

During the last autumn some differences arose in our Branch respecting the T. S. and Theosophy. Those differences surged from the ignorance of its spirit. Some argued that Adyar, Madras, was the seat of the Society, and that the existence of various Societies could not answer to the principle of the universal fraternity. And they added that the division excluded the union. They wondered that those who preached the ideals of tolerance and love, were not able to practise them. But then there was a fervent change of ideas, when they clearly noted the reasons which moved the great W. Q. Judge, to declare with all solemnity the purity of the doctrine at the Convention of 1895, repeating the case of Paul concerning the Church of Peter. Mr. Judge, the most modest, the most earnest, patient and self-abnegating of the fellow-labourers of H. P. B. in the foundation of the Society, saved the universal conception of Theosophy, showing that it appertains to all places on the earth and not only to Adyar, as the sincere Christian saves the universal conception of Christ, redeeming it from the restrictions of Rome. Thus the Convention of Boston freed the work of the Masters from two dangers that threatened its existence; from sectarianism in its form, and from dogmatism in its doctrine. Since then Theosophy does not constitute the patrimony of one man or an assemblage of men, neither the privilege of a nation: it goes through every way of humanity: and it exists where love exists, where abnegation exists, or self-control and permanent sacrifice in behalf of the evolution of man. The "Venezuela" Branch is now translating, for publication the admirable article of Mr. Henry Bedinger Mitchell about The Theosophical Society and Theosophy.

We are glad to bring to the knowledge of the Convention that one of our efficient associates, in a tour of the neighbouring Republic of Columbia, found some very earnest students, who may ask for their incorporation in the T. S. This incident opens a new perspective towards another American State, and it seems to promise well for the whole of South America.

The "Venezuela" Branch send a fraternal greeting to their brethren assembled in Convention; and send their most sincere wishes for the success of their labours.

F. Dominguez Acosta, *President.*

Virya Branch

Denver, Colorado.

The Virya Branch of Denver, Colorado, has held monthly meetings during the fall and winter. The Yoga Sutras, as published in the Theosophical Quarterly, have been studied and have been found very interesting so far as the class has progressed. The attendance this winter has been more regular, and larger than heretofore. As a Branch our work is confined to the meetings, but individual work is carried on by members, covering a larger field.

Bertha L. Gorich, *Secretary.*

Cincinnati Branch

Cincinnati, O.

I will endeavor to write a brief letter of Greeting to the Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society which will be held in New York City, April 27, 1912. I have been confined in my home since the first of February, with an attack of pneumonia and am still unable to be out, although I am slowly improving—I mention this personal matter merely to explain the cause of my inability to write an unabbreviated communication.

I realize more fully every day the greatness of the Theosophical message given to the world by Madame H. P. Blavatsky, as the fully qualified instrument of the Masters. To me it has been the one great revelation of Truth concerning the nature, origin and principles involved in the Cosmos and Man—the Macrocosm and the Microcosm. I have seen this message permeate Science, Philosophy and Religion—and revolutionize modern thought from a materialistic tendency to a contemplation of spiritual and soul realities.

There is no movement or activity synthesizing the man-made subdivisions of Truth classified as Science, Philosophy and Religion which is all-inclusive except the Theosophical Movement. Its three objects adopted and declared by its founders in 1875 are as wide as life. They are big enough to include all Truth and exclude all error, could we understand them as they are. Many fragmentary efforts to give Truth to the world have been attempted in recent years, such as New Thought, Eddyism, Emmanuelism, Natural Philosophy, Bahaism, etc., but when the message given by the Masters through H. P. B. is fully comprehended, intuitionally, it will be found to include all these and a great deal more. Comparatively few living persons have studied and even partially understood what H. P. B. communicated in *Isis Unveiled,* the *Key to Theosophy* and the *Secret Doctrine.* Some have appropriated to their personal credit ideas contained in H. P. B.'s works—in books they have published without giving any credit to the source of their information.

I consider that the leaders of The Theosophical Society have a mission to perform of which there has been none of greater moment to the spiritual unfoldment of humanity and the illumination of the soul. Its mission being to enlighten those who are karmically ready, as to the spiritual laws to be followed in order self-consciously to awaken to the immortality of the Soul.

One only has to read the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY to realize that the leaders of the Theosophical Movement are worthy instruments through which the great movement—backed by the Masters—is proceeding. The members of the Cincinnati Branch are fully appreciative of what is being done by the unselfish editors and writers for the QUARTERLY, and desire that I should express in this letter of greeting, their heartfelt gratitude.

Mr. Manning, our Secretary, has sent you a report of the Cincinnati Branch. While it shows that we have not grown in nominal membership, it shows also that our Branch is in a healthy, harmonious condition, and that we are doing a good work here in keeping Theosophical ideas in operation.

I would like, above everything else, to attend the Convention and mingle with those present in such a way as to partake of the altruistic, brotherly spirit which I know will prevail; but my karma has settled it otherwise; so I shall have to accept the situation with resignation and be with you in spirit but not in person.

Believing and trusting that Theosophy will ever find worthy exponents—I extend to the Convention my soul's fullest greeting.

W. A. R. TENNEY, *President.*

PACIFIC BRANCH

Los Angeles, Calif.

To the Members of the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled.
GREETING:

The members of Pacific Branch, of the extreme west Pacific coast, send fraternal goodwill to the members of the Atlantic coast in their assemblage at the Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society, and pledge their unfaltering support to the great work of the Society,—coming to them as a heritage from the

Lodge of the Masters, in the cause of all humanity, in the furtherance of Universal Brotherhood and man's identification with Immortality.

Sincerely and Fraternally,

ALFRED L. LEONARD, *Secretary.*

UNITY BRANCH

Indianapolis, Ind.

The Unity Branch sends its heartiest greetings and fraternal goodwill to the members of The Theosophical Society in Convention assembled, and expresses its concurrence in all the acts of the Convention.

Our Branch is closing a year of earnest effort, and we all feel that we are laying a firm foundation for some efficient future work. We follow a simple plan for the conduct of our meetings; issuing each month in print a syllabus of interesting subjects for discussion, and reserving the first meeting in each month for our general "Question Evening." We also try to make a "Social Moment" one of the best features of our meetings.

We are now in our new home. We have a fine, large room in a building centrally located, which will comfortably seat fifty or more persons, and which we have leased and neatly furnished. Our general attendance is very good, an average of seventy-five per month. We now have a membership of twenty-two, having acquired five new members and lost, by resignation, three.

MRS. HELEN FAULKNER, *President.*

CLOSE OF THE CONVENTION

With the reading of the Letters of Greeting and Reports from Branches the formal business of the Convention was completed.

Mr. H. B. Mitchell, as President of the New York Branch, expressed the great pleasure which it had given the Branch to receive the visiting delegates and to have been permitted to be the hosts of the Convention. On behalf of the Branch he extended its cordial invitation to the delegates to attend the regular Branch Meeting which would be held that evening and at which "Methods of Theosophic Work" would be discussed.

On motion of Mr. Johnston a unanimous vote of thanks was given the Chairman and Secretary of the Convention for their services.

On motion of Mrs. Gitt, a vote of thanks was extended to the New York Branch for its hospitality.

On motion the Convention adjourned, at 5.25 P. M.

EVENING MEETING OF THE NEW YORK BRANCH

In the evening there was the regular meeting of the New York Branch—attended by the delegates to the Convention as well as by other visitors. Mr. Hargrove opened the meeting by an address on "Methods of Theosophic Work," which was then made the subject for general discussion.

PUBLIC LECTURE

On Sunday, April 28th, the day following the Convention, a public lecture was given in the Convention Hall, by Mr. E. T. Hargrove upon "Theosophy,"—Mr. Charles Johnston being in the chair, and the audience overcrowding the hall.

J. F. B. MITCHELL,
Secretary of the Convention.

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS.

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THEOSOPHICAL BADGES, gold, 2.50; rolled gold	1.00

These and any other books on Theosophical, Religious and Philosophical subjects, can be obtained from

THE SECRETARY T. S.,

159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

The Theosophical Society

Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread in this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S., 159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

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